

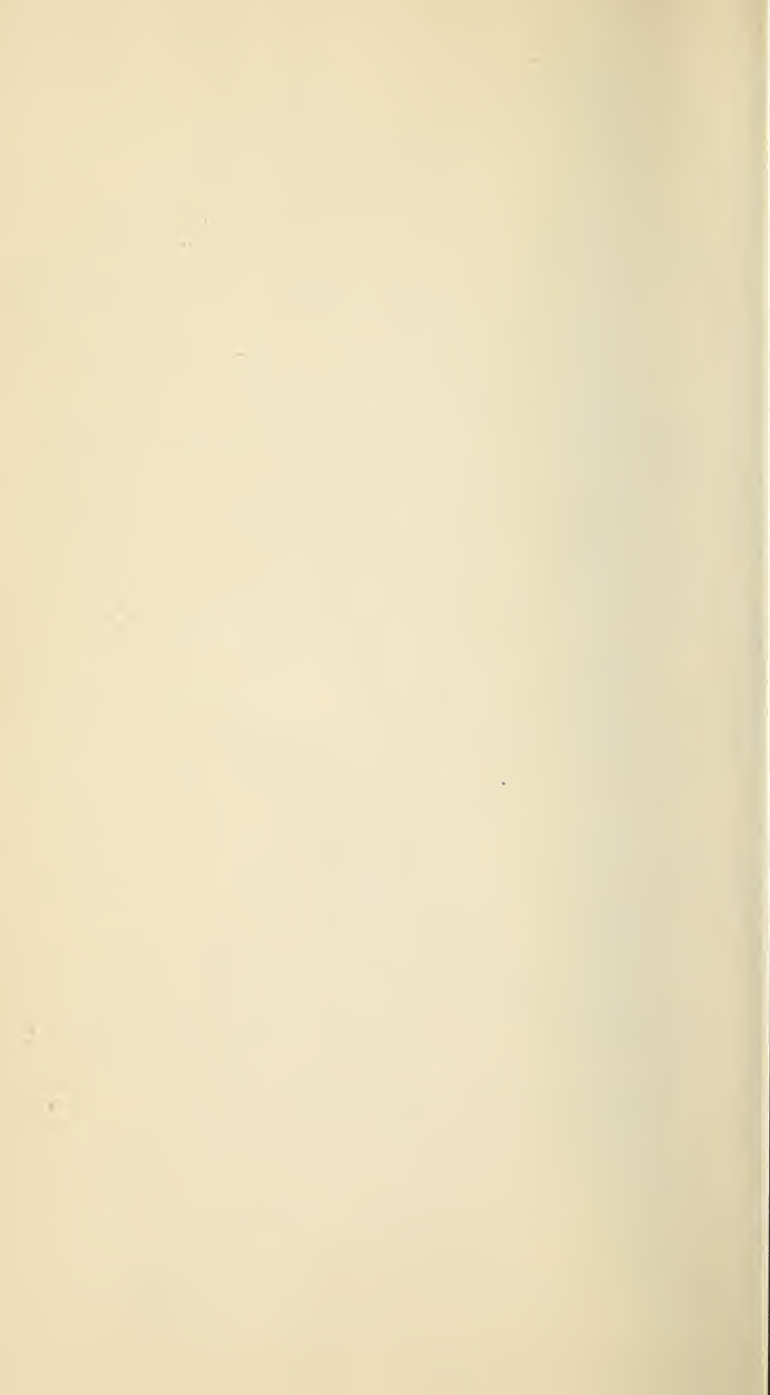
# THE GREAT ENGLISH WRITERS

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PACKS & BROWN









THE  
GREAT ENGLISH WRITERS

FROM

CHAUCER TO GEORGE ELIOT,

WITH SELECTIONS

ILLUSTRATING THEIR WORKS;

A TEXT-BOOK OF ENGLISH LITERATURE FOR  
THE USE OF SCHOOLS.

✓ BY

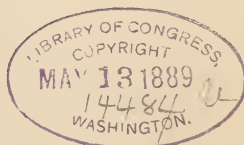
TRUMAN J. BACKUS, LL.D.,

PRESIDENT OF PACKER COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE, BROOKLYN,

AND

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HELEN DAWES BROWN,

TEACHER OF ENGLISH LITERATURE IN THE BREARLEY SCHOOL, NEW YORK.



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## PREFACE.

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SHAW'S *Complete Manual of English Literature*, revised and rewritten by me, was published in 1875 under the title, *Shaw's New History of English Literature*. It has been enlarged from time to time, and, with each succeeding edition, has been used by an increased number of my fellow-teachers. It has been praised unduly; and, in some instances, it has been condemned unjustly.

The criticisms most frequently and urgently offered have been that the authors discussed are too numerous, and that the literary style of the book is somewhat too mature for many of the students in whose hands it is placed.

Accepting these criticisms, I have attempted to meet them—not by revision of the new History, but by making this text-book upon a new plan, discussing only those authors who are very prominent, and adapting the style and method of the book to students who are taking their first survey of the History of English Literature.

My purpose to meet the demand for such a book has been long delayed. It might not have been fulfilled had I not fortunately secured the co-operation of MISS HELEN DAWES BROWN, whose success as a student and as a

teacher of the English Literature has been a source of satisfaction and pride to her former instructor.

This volume contains extended selections from the writings of the authors discussed. Concise editorial comments point out those literary characteristics of each author which are especially deserving of the student's attention. The selections have, in nearly every case, been reprinted from the English editions of best authority. The extracts from Shakespeare follow the text of W. J. Rolfe. The Clarendon Press Series has been used whenever it supplied the work quoted.

It is the earnest hope of the authors that the selections may not be allowed to take the place of reading from the complete works of a writer. It cannot be too often said that the study of biography, criticism, and brief selections does not constitute a direct and personal knowledge of English literature. The object of this book is not to satisfy, but rather to stimulate the desire for such knowledge.

TRUMAN J. BACKUS.

THE PACKER COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE, }  
*Brooklyn, N. Y., May 1, 1889.* }



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## A LIST OF BOOKS FOR THE LIBRARY.

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*The school library should contain the following books :*

Selections from Chaucer, Clarendon Press Series.

Selections from Spenser, Clarendon Press Series.

Shakespeare's Richard III., Henry IV. (Part I.), Hamlet, King Lear, Macbeth, Julius Cæsar, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Merchant of Venice, Romeo and Juliet, Much Ado About Nothing, Twelfth Night, As You Like It, and The Tempest,—edited by W. J. Rolfe, or by H. N. Hudson.

Bacon's Essays.

English Poems of Milton, Clarendon Press Series.

Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.

Selections from Dryden, Clarendon Press Series.

Pope's Poems.

The Spectator.

Eighteenth Century Essays, edited by Austin Dobson.

Swift's Gulliver's Travels.

Defoe's Robinson Crusoe.

Johnson's Lives of the Poets, edited by Matthew Arnold.

Selections from Burke (Vol. I.), Clarendon Press Series.

Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield.

Goldsmith's Poems.

Burns' Poems.

Scott's Poems, Ivanhoe, The Talisman, Quentin Durward, Guy Mannering, Kenilworth, Rob Roy.

Poems of Byron, edited by Matthew Arnold.

Poems of Wordsworth, edited by Matthew Arnold.

Macaulay's Essays.

Lives of Chaucer, Spenser, Bacon, Milton, Bunyan, Dryden, Pope, Addison, Swift, Defoe, Johnson, Burke, Goldsmith, Gibbon, Burns, Scott, Byron, Wordsworth, and Macaulay, in the "English Men of Letters" Series.

Stopford A. Brooke's Milton.

Boswell's Life of Johnson.

Irving's Life of Goldsmith.

Lowell's "Among My Books," and "My Study Windows."

Whipple's Essays and Reviews, and Literature of the Age of Elizabeth.

Leslie Stephen's Hours in a Library.

Ward's English Poets.

Saintsbury's History of Elizabethan Literature.

Gosse's Literature of the Eighteenth Century.

Taine's History of English Literature, edited by John Fiske.

Thackeray's English Humorists.

Hudson's Life, Art and Characters of Shakespeare.

Dowden's Mind and Art of Shakespeare.

Dowden's Primer of Shakespeare.

Mrs. Jameson's Characteristics of Women.

Hazlitt's Characters of Shakespeare's Plays.

J. R. Green's Short History of the English People.

Bartlett's Familiar Quotations.

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*Note.*—Every pupil is advised to own the Rev. Stopford A. Brooke's Primer of English Literature, and to read carefully the sketch of each author mentioned in this text-book.

# THE GREAT ENGLISH WRITERS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

(1340—1400.)

“I consider Chaucer as a genial day in an English Spring.”—  
*Thomas Warton.*

“He had a very fine ear for the music of verse, and the tale and the verse go together like voice and music. Indeed, so softly flowing and bright are they, that to read them is like listening in a meadow full of sunshine to a clear stream rippling over its bed of pebbles.”—  
*Stopford Brooke.*

“If character may be divined from works, he was a good man, genial, sincere, hearty, temperate of mind, more wise, perhaps, for this world than the next, but thoroughly humane, and friendly with God and man.”—*Lowell.*

“O mayster dere and fadir reverent,  
My mayster Chaucer, floure of eloquence,  
Mirrour of fructuous endement,  
O universal fadir in science,  
Alas that thou thine excellent prudence,  
In thy bed mortel mighteste not bequethe!  
What eyled Death? Alas! why would he sle the?”

—*Occleve.*

“He is the poet of the dawn, who wrote  
The Canterbury Tales, and his old age  
Made beautiful with song; and as I read  
I hear the crowing cock, I hear the note  
Of lark and linnet, and from every page  
Rise odors of ploughed field or flowery mead.”

**Writers before Chaucer.**—Chaucer was the first great English poet. He began to write in the middle of the fourteenth century, and with that date, English literature, as it is known to the general reader, may be said to begin.

Many men had been writing in England, however, before Chaucer lived. (1.) Some had written their books in Latin, which was in those early days the only language that learned men thought proper for the writing of really serious books. Such a writer was the Venerable Bede, a learned monk, who wrote an Ecclesiastical History of the English. (2.) After the Normans had conquered England, the gay French poets of the court wrote many songs and long tales in verse. But these writers of Latin and French have properly no place in English Literature. (3.) A third and far more important class were those who used the old English tongue,—the language that many people now call Anglo-Saxon. It is, however, only the old form of the very English that we speak to-day. In this ancient English several important works were written. (*a.*) There is the epic poem that relates the exploits of Beowulf, a wild story of war and the sea, of storm and of fighting. (*b.*) There is the Bible history put into poetry by the monk Caedmon. (*c.*) Good King Alfred wrote much in this old English; among other things, a translation from the Latin of Bede's Ecclesiastical History. This book was most useful to his people as a history of their country, and has ever since been used by their historians as the basis of the earliest English history. (*d.*) Another work that is now of great value to the historian is the Saxon Chronicle. Some think that it was King Alfred who advised his people to keep this record. At all events, it began to be written in his reign. The Chronicle goes back to the landing of Julius Cæsar in Britain, and proceeds with a dry, monotonous statement of the facts of English history. For example :



“901.—This year died Alfred, the son of Ethelwulf, six nights before the mass of All Saints. He was king over all the English nation, except that part that was under the power of the Danes. He held the government one year and a half less than thirty winters; and then Edward, his son, took to the government.”

Occasionally the record of kings and battles is interrupted by a song, just as in the Hebrew Chronicles occurs a song or a prayer after long genealogies or lists of rulers.

From Alfred's time, the Chronicle was kept year by year in seven different monasteries, and was continued until the accession of Henry II., in 1154.

**Chaucer's Times.**—The year 1340 is probably the date of Geoffrey Chaucer's birth, and 1400 is certainly the date of his death. The sixty years that he lived covered a most interesting period of English history. Many great changes were going on in social life. The feudal system was giving way, and people were gaining in freedom every day. English and Normans were fighting together against the French, and from their pride in a common cause, became at last friendly and united. The victories of Crécy and Poitiers sent them home proud of themselves and their country. The nation was happy and prosperous, vigorous and active. Its activity took many forms. Men began to think for themselves, and to be eager to write and express their thoughts on all sorts of subjects. (1.) One subject that they had much in mind was religion; for the wisest men saw that the Christian Church had lost much of the pure and noble influence it was meant to wield. They boldly criticised the faults of their priests, as we see when we read Chaucer's Prologue. Chaucer denounced the bad men among the clergy, and John Wyclif dared even to reject doctrines of the Church. This was a hundred years before the Reformation, but Wyclif has been called the “first Protestant.” (2.) People thought anxiously about

social problems, as they are doing in our own day. What was felt then about the relations of rich and poor may be seen by reading William Langlande's *Vision of Piers Ploughman*. (3.) There was a movement toward greater political freedom. Parliament gained new powers. It dared to demand protection for the people against oppression by the Pope or by the King. (4.) There was also great commercial progress. Towns and cities grew, manufactures spread, wealth increased. Such was the age of Chaucer—the age that is reflected in his writings.

**Life.**—Geoffrey Chaucer was of good birth and breeding. We learn that, as a boy, he was a page in the household of a prince—the most fashionable training for a youth of that day. Whether he went to college or not is uncertain. In one of his poems he speaks of himself under the name and character of “Philogenet—of Cambridge—Clerk;” but this should hardly be taken as proof that he was educated at Cambridge. We know that, when a young man, he served as a soldier in France, was taken prisoner, and ransomed. Chaucer was not only a man of letters, but also an active and public-spirited citizen and man of business. He held several public offices, and was especially useful to the king as an agent to foreign countries. Three times he was sent to Italy on public business. He was elected a member of Parliament in 1386; but in the political turmoil of that year, he lost all his offices. He was afterward appointed superintendent of royal buildings, and had charge of the repairs and building at the Palace of Westminster, the Tower, and St. George's Chapel, Windsor. Chaucer died in 1400, and was buried in Poets' Corner at Westminster Abbey.

**His Personal Appearance.**—Chaucer has himself told us how he looked. In the prologue to *The Rime of Sir*

*Thopas*, the host of the Tabard, himself represented as a "large man," and a "faire burgess," calls upon Chaucer in his turn to contribute a story to the amusement of the pilgrims, and rallies him on his corpulency, as well as on his absent-minded air :

"What man art thou?" quod he;  
 "Thou lokest as thou woldest fynde an hare;  
 For ever upon the ground I se the stare.  
 Approche ner, and loke merrily.  
 Now ware you, sires, and let this man have space.  
 He in the wast is schape as well as I;  
 He semeth elvisch by his countenance,  
 For unto no wight doth he daliaunce."

A very old portrait of Chaucer is painted in one of the most valuable manuscript copies of his poems, and is probably the work of his friend and fellow-poet, Occleve. This is the original of the picture with which we are acquainted. It shows him with a thoughtful, pleasant expression. He "semeth elvisch by his countenance," and wears the same shy, half-mischievous look that the host detected in his face.

**His Literary Career.**—When Chaucer began to write, the English literature imitated the French. France had set the fashion of long narratives in rhyme, which often took the form of dreams, visions, and allegories. Chaucer followed the lead of other poets. He caught the infection of allegory, and many of his poems, such as *The Court of Love*, *The Assembly of Fowls*, *The Flower and the Leaf*, and *The House of Fame*, are allegorical. The great event of Chaucer's literary career was his visit to Italy, where he learned to admire Italian literature. The tradition is that he met Petrarch, "whose rethorique sweete enlumyned al Itail of poetrie," and who, so Chaucer tells, related to him the story of Patient Griselda. He read

Boccaccio, and learned much from him about the art of story-telling. Chaucer returned to England with the intention of writing a book of tales like the *Decameron* of Boccaccio. For many years he carried this purpose in his mind, writing at intervals stories comic, pathetic, or romantic, which were finally gathered together, and formed *The Canterbury Tales*. The work grew much as Tennyson's *Idyls of the King* have grown from year to year.

Chaucer may have used the form of French allegory, or the plan of Italian story-tellers; but when his first youth was over, he became a thoroughly English writer. For instance, in the *Boke of the Duchesse*, which follows the French device of a dream, there occurs this life-like picture of a young English girl:

“ I sawgh hir daunce so comelely,  
 Carole and synge so swetely,  
 Lawghe and pleye so womanly,  
 And loke so debonairly;  
 So goodely speke and so frendly;  
 That certes Y trowe that evermore,  
 Nas seyne so blysful a tresore.  
 For every heer upon hir hede,  
 Soth to seyne, hyt was not rede,  
 Ne nouthur yelow, ne broune hyt nas;  
 Me thoghte most lyke gold hyt was.  
 And which eyen my lady hadde!  
 Debonaire, goode, glade, and sadde,  
 Symple, of goode mochel, noght to wyde.  
 Therto hir looke was not asyde,  
 Ne overthwert.”

For the plan of *The Canterbury Tales* Chaucer may have received a hint from Boccaccio, but there is not in our literature a more hearty English work. In saying that Chaucer was thoroughly English, we must remember that he also knew other countries well, that he had a broad, open mind, and great adaptability.



**The Canterbury Tales** is Chaucer's greatest work. The plan, though simple, is admirable, since it enables the poet to bring together a great variety of men and women, and to make each tell a story suited to his character. The plan is laid before us in the Prologue. The poet tells us that, being about to make a pilgrimage from London to the shrine of Thomas à Becket in the Cathedral of Canterbury, he passes the night previous to his departure at the Tabard Inn in Southwark. While at the "hostelrie" he meets many pilgrims bound to the same destination :—

"In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay,  
Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage  
To Caunterbury with ful devout corage,  
At night was come into that hostelrie  
Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye  
Of sondry folk, by aventure i-falle  
In felaweschipe, and pilgryms were thei alle,  
That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde."

This goodly company, assembled in a manner so natural in those times of pilgrimages and of difficult and dangerous roads, agree to travel in a body ; and at supper Harry Bailey, the host of the Tabard, a jolly and sociable fellow, proposes to accompany the party as a guide, and suggests that they may enliven the tedium of their journey by relating stories as they ride. He is accepted by the company as leader, by whose decision every one is to abide. The jovial guide proposes that each pilgrim shall relate two tales on the journey out, and two more on the way home ; and that, on the return of the party to London, he who shall have related the best story, shall sup at the common cost. Such is the general plan of the poem. In the description of manners, persons, dress, and outfit, with which the poet has introduced his stories, we behold a vast portrait gallery of English society in the fourteenth century. These wonderful character sketches will repay careful study. There is

the portrait of the Prioress, the fine lady of Chaucer's day. She is at the head of a fashionable convent, and is attended by a nun and three priests. There is the Knight, Chaucer's ideal gentleman—

“That from the tyme that he first bigan  
To ryden out, he lovede chyvalrye,  
Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisie”

With the knight rides a young squire, the “swell” of the fourteenth century,—

“Embrowded was he, as it were a mede,  
Al ful of fresshe floures, white and reede.  
Syngynge he was, or flotyng, al the day;  
He was as fressh as is the moneth of May.  
He cowde songes make and wel endite,  
Juste and eek daunce, and wel purtreye and write.”

Chaucer introduces to us a monk and a friar who are no credit to the Church; but to offset their worldliness, he creates the noble and beautiful character of the Parson:—

“A good man was ther of religioun,  
And was a poure Persoun of a toun;  
But riche he was of holy thought and werk.”

The doctor, the merchant, and the lawyer, are not omitted. Even the cook, the carpenter, the miller, and the sailor, are there. *The Canterbury Tales* thus becomes a work of great historical as well as literary value. No fewer than thirty-two persons went on this famous pilgrimage, and if each of them had related two tales on the journey to Canterbury, and two on the return, the work would have contained one hundred and twenty-eight stories. This plan was never carried out. The stories that we possess are but twenty-five in number; for several of the pilgrims never speak at all, and the “merie companye” never reaches Canterbury in Chaucer's pages. The stories are

linked together by what the author calls prologues, consisting of remarks and criticisms on the preceding tale, and of the incidents of the journey. Chaucer's characters are never more life-like than in these dramatic links between his stories.

The stories themselves were seldom invented by Chaucer. He borrowed as freely as he pleased from old French poets or Italian story-tellers. But, says Lowell, if a man discover the art of transmuting lead into gold, shall we inquire too carefully whether he steals his lead?

There is great variety among the stories, as there was great variety among the people who told them. Every kind of story known to Chaucer's day may be found in *The Canterbury Tales*. There is the romance related by the knight; the Prioress' legend of "Litel Hew of Lincoln," the child who was cruelly slain for singing his hymn to the Virgin; there is the coarse story of common life, as the miller's tale; there is the allegory, in the long prose tale of Melibeus; and the fable, in the story of the Cock, told by one of the priests who attended the Prioress. The Clerk of Oxenford relates the pathetic tale of Patient Griselda, the most touching and beautiful of Chaucer's stories (p. 228).

Of all the Canterbury pilgrims only two addressed the company in prose. One was the worthy parson, who took the opportunity to preach a long sermon on the seven deadly sins. It is dull enough, but it has an historical interest as a specimen of the sermons to which Chaucer and his contemporaries were obliged to listen.

**Chaucer's Character.**—Chaucer was clearly a man respected and trusted by the community, a faithful and competent public servant. From his writings we can learn still more about his mind and character. *The Canterbury Tales* tell us of his democratic spirit. Says Chaucer:—

“Lok who that is most virtuous alway,  
Privé and pert, and most entendith ay  
To do the gentil dedes that he can,  
Tak him for the grettest gentilman.  
Christ wol we clayme of him oure gentillesse,  
Nought of oure eldres for her olde richesse.”

We learn from Chaucer's writings how broad and human were his sympathies, and how deep was his knowledge of men. He looked at them with a singularly even temper and clear judgment. No fault or folly escapes his keen eye, but his reproof is always kindly and genial. He loved his fellow-men ; but his character was so well rounded that he loved books and solitude besides.

“ On bokes for to rede I me delyte,  
And to hem give I feyth and ful credence,  
And in myn herte have hem in reverence,  
So hertely, that ther is game noon,  
That fro my bokes maketh me to goon,  
But yt be seldom on the holy day,  
Save, certeynly, when that the monethe of May  
Is comen, and that I here the foules synge,  
And that the floures gynnyn for to sprynge,  
Farewel my boke, and my devocioun!”

Chaucer loved nature, as we might guess from those fresh spring verses with which *The Canterbury Tales* begin.

Chaucer's humor is delightful. Nothing was lost on his sensitive nature : he was quickly touched by the humorous or by the pathetic side of life and character. Nothing can surpass his gentleness and tenderness in such a tale as that of Little Hugh ; or his sly, delicate humor in the portrait of the Prioress ; or, again, the boisterous fun of some of his comic tales. We feel that these traits of the writer were undoubtedly qualities of Chaucer the man,—that he was broad, charitable, human, that he was shrewd, observant, and thoughtful, that he was tender and pitiful, and yet full of the best kind of fun.

**Chaucer's English.**—Chaucer occupies an important place in the history of the English language. Our language was brought into England from the continent by the Teutonic tribes who conquered Britain in the fifth century. The Normans, in their turn, conquered the country in 1066, and settled in England in large numbers. The two languages, Norman and Saxon, received a great shock when they came together. The first effect was to drive them apart. The new-comers were the royal family, the nobility, the clergy, and the army; there was among them no mass of common people whose station would compel them to mingle with the conquered Saxons. The nobility used the Norman speech, and continued to use their influence in its favor until the fourteenth century. No attempt was made to force the French language upon the Saxons; but the two races did not seek each other's companionship,—as children would say, they “did not speak to each other.” This mutual dislike lasted for a century; then followed a hundred years of apparent indifference; but in the third century after the Conquest, the dislike was beginning to wear away, and at last all classes of people were united by their common interest in the foreign wars of England. When Normans and Saxons fought together against the French, they became Englishmen. Their languages began to blend with the same friendliness in which they themselves now associated. Old English, influenced by French, underwent many changes. Saxon words, as pronounced or written by the Normans, were often contracted in pronunciation or spelling; more important still, the old English lost the greater part of its inflections; and perhaps most important result of all, a large number of French words was introduced, and the way was thus opened for the entrance of foreign words into the language. This ready adoption of words from foreign sources has been from that day a striking characteristic of the English tongue.



Some critics maintain that it makes an unscholarly mixture of contributions from all nations; others say that it gives us the richest and most flexible of modern languages.

In the fourteenth century, when these great changes were going on, Chaucer began to write. It is a matter of no small importance to us that he lent the influence of his writings to the strengthening and establishing of the English language in its new form. From the Norman Conquest until the time of Chaucer, the Latin had been used in England by those who wrote for the learned; the French was the language of fashionable literature, and the English was written only for the ignorant. But Chaucer saw in the English tongue strong, fresh, original material for his literary art. "Let clerks [scholars] indite in Latin," he says in the *Testament of Love*, "and the Frenchmen in their French also indite their quaint terms, for it is kindly to their mouths; and let us show our fantasies in such words as we learned of our mother's tongue." His follower, Occleve, called him "the firste fynder of our faire langage." So popular a writer did much to fix the English speech. The readers of his poetry fell naturally into its language, and Chaucer became a model, a standard,—that is, a classic.

The difficulty of reading and understanding his writings has been much exaggerated. The pupil will discover that the more knowledge of French and German he possesses, the easier will he find *The Canterbury Tales*. In the fourteenth century, the Norman and Saxon elements in our language were much less closely blended than now: the Saxon words were more like their kindred German words, while the Norman were more like French. The student should keep in mind that the Norman words in Chaucer's writings, not having yet become thoroughly English, are therefore to be read with their French accent.



He should remember that final *e* is usually to be pronounced as a separate syllable, when the word following does not begin with a vowel or with the letter *h*; and, finally, that the termination of the verb, *ed*, is to be made a separate syllable. If the pupil will commit to memory the following lines according to the metrical division, he will find little further difficulty in pronouncing Chaucer rhythmically.

“Whan that | April | le with | his schow | res swoote,  
 The drought | of Marche | hath per | ced to | the roote,  
 And ba | thed eve | ry veyne | in swich | licour,  
 Of which | vertue | engen | dred is | the flour ;  
 Whan Ze | phirus | eek with | his swe | te breethe,  
 Enspi | red hath | in eve | ry holte | and heethe  
 The ten | dre crop | pes, and | the yon | ge sonne  
 Hath in | the Ram | his hal | fe cours | ironne,  
 And sma | le fow | les ma | ken me | lodie,  
 That sle | pen al | the night | with o | pen eye,  
 So pri | keth hem | nature | in here | corages :—  
 Thanne | on | gen folk | to gon | on pil | grimages.”

**Chaucer's Influence** on English poetry has been very great. All the poets of his own time admired and imitated him. Gower, in one of his poems, makes Love say of Chaucer :

“Of ditties and of songes glad,  
 The which he for my sake made,  
 The land fulfilled is over all.”

Occleve bewails the death of his “mayster dere and fadir reverent, mayster Chaucer, floure of eloquence.” Lydgate, a voluminous narrative poet, refers to his “maister Chaucer,” “the lodesterre of our language.” When we reach the Elizabethan age, we find Spenser looking back to Chaucer for his inspiration. He calls him a “well of English undefyled,” and adopts his language as well as his spirit. Milton pays a tribute to him in *Il Penseroso*. The un-

poetical age of Queen Anne saw little beauty in Chaucer. Addison wrote :

“But age has rusted what the poet writ,  
Worn out his language, and obscured his wit.”

In our later time there has arisen a new interest in Chaucer. With such writers as Burns and Wordsworth, we return to the spirit of Chaucer, and to the spring-time of English poetry.

**Suggestions for Reading.**—The Prologue of *The Canterbury Tales*,—*The Clerkes Tale*,—*The Nonne Prestes Tale*,—*The Prioresses Tale*, in the Clarendon Press Series;—Chaucer (*English Men of Letters*), Chapters I. and III.;—Ward’s *English Poets*,—*Essay on Chaucer*;—Selections from Lowell’s *Essay on Chaucer*.

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**In this chapter we have considered :—**

1. *Writers before Chaucer.*
2. *Chaucer’s Times.*
3. *His Life.*
4. *His Personal Appearance.*
5. *His Literary Career.*
6. *The Canterbury Tales.*
7. *Chaucer’s Character.*
8. *Chaucer’s English.*
9. *Chaucer’s Influence.*

## CHAPTER II.

### EDMUND SPENSER.

(1553-1599.)

“The poets’ poet.”—*Charles Lamb*.

“Our sage and serious Spenser.”—*Milton*.

“Of all the poets, he is the most poetical.”—*Hazlitt*.

“Old Spenser next, warmed with poetic rage,  
In ancient tales amused a barbarous age;  
An age that yet uncultivate and rude,  
Where’er the poet’s fancy led, pursued.

\* \* \* \* \*

But now the mystic tale, that pleased of yore,  
Can charm an understanding age no more.”—*Addison*.

“The true use of him is as a gallery of pictures which we visit as the mood takes us, and where we spend an hour or two at a time, long enough to sweeten our perceptions, not so long as to cloy them. He makes one think always of Venice; for not only is his style Venetian, but as the gallery there is housed in the shell of an abandoned convent, so his in that of a deserted allegory.”—*Lowell*.

“To the most high, mightie, and magnificent Emperesse, renowned for pietie, vertue, and all gracious government, Elizabeth, by the grace of God Queene of England, Fraunce, and Ireland, and of Virginia, Defender of the Faith, etc., her most humble servaunt, Edmund Spenser, doth in all humilitie dedicate, present, and consecrate these his labours to live with the eternitie of her fame.”—*Dedication of The Faerie Queene*.

**Spenser’s Times.**—The first great expression of the English mind in literature ended with the death of Chaucer. There followed a period of one hundred and fifty years in which not one man of literary genius appeared. From 1400 to the Elizabethan age, English literature has

little interest for us. (1.) The introduction of printing into England by William Caxton, in 1474, was an event of importance in helping to prepare the way for the second period of literary activity. (2.) The revival of the ancient Greek learning, which had begun in Italy, became in England, too, the source of new thought and intellectual energy. Till they began to study the ancient literatures, the English people had no models but the Italian and the French. Now they found books great in thought and noble in form, which gave them an entirely new inspiration. (a.) Among the scholars associated with this New Learning, as it was called, was Roger Ascham, the tutor of Queen Elizabeth and Lady Jane Grey. He wrote a valuable book about teaching, called *The Schoolmaster*. (b.) A second famous scholar was Sir Thomas More, who wrote in Latin a description of an ideal country, where social and political usages had reached a state of perfection. We derive from the title, *Utopia*, our adjective Utopian. (c.) Still another famous classical scholar was William Tyndale, who was the first to make a translation of the New Testament into English, directly from the Greek. The English Bible that Wyclif had given to the people had been a translation from a Latin version of the Greek and Hebrew original.

Intellect had been slumbering for nearly two centuries. It awoke now with freshness and vigor. There was no limit to the new interests that the world offered at that moment to the minds of men. Voyages to distant lands across the Atlantic stimulated the curiosity and imagination of the Englishman; classic learning roused his scholarly and literary instincts; the great questions of the Reformation filled his thoughts. Moreover, nothing that related to his every-day life was indifferent to him; his dress, his house, and his furniture, received new attention. Life was found to be well worth enjoying, and people set

themselves about making the world a pleasanter place to live in. Such was England when Spenser wrote *The Faerie Queene*.

**Life of Spenser.**—The great English poet who follows next after Chaucer is Edmund Spenser. He was born in London about 1553. We know little of his youth, except that he was poor, and that he loved books. Spenser went to the University of Cambridge, and his writings make us sure that he was an apt and appreciative student. On leaving college, he spent two years in the north of England, where he fell in love with a “fair widowe’s daughter of the glen.” The young lady, whom he called Rosalind, did not return his affection, and he was driven for solace to writing *The Shepherd’s Calendar*. Spenser’s college friend, Gabriel Harvey, wished to do his old companion a good turn, and persuaded Spenser to come to London, where Harvey introduced him to the powerful Earl of Leicester, and to Sir Philip Sidney. Sidney was himself a writer, but it has been his charm and nobility of character rather than his writings that have endeared him to the world. He was scholarly in his tastes, and magnanimous and heroic in spirit. His own lofty character may be best described by his definition of the gentleman: the man of “high-erected thoughts seated in a heart of courtesy.” Sidney welcomed Spenser to his house, treated him with the utmost kindness, and cheered him on in his literary ambition. Spenser revised his *Shepherd’s Calendar*, and dedicated it to “Maiser Philip Sidney, worthy of all titles, both of chivalry and poesy.” He was anxious to win the patronage of some great person who would enable him to devote his life to literary pursuits. Whoever desired to be a writer in those days, if he were a poor man, must secure the patronage of wealth. Spenser’s object was well-nigh accomplished when Sidney and Leicester became his friends. They soon

brought him to the notice of the Queen. To her he paid his literary homage, gaining her applause, and receiving a government office in Ireland in 1580.

During the remaining eighteen years of his life, Spenser's home was in Ireland. In 1586 he received a grant of three thousand acres of land, with Kilcolman Castle for his residence. He lived in the southern part of the country, surrounded by beautiful scenery and in the quiet and seclusion that were necessary for the writing of a great imaginative poem. His position in Ireland was, however, an unhappy one. The peasantry bitterly hated an Englishman who came, as he did, to represent the English government; and he, in turn, had no love for the Irish. He wrote, in prose, a *View of the State of Ireland*; and a very gloomy view it was.

"They say, it is the fatall desteny of that land, that noe purposes, whatsoever are meant for her good, will prosper or take good effect, which, whether it proceede from the very Genius of the soyle, or influence of the starres, or that Almighty God hath not yet appoynted the time of her reformation, or that He reserveth her in this unquiett state still for some secrett scourdge, which shall by her come unto England, it is hard to be knownen, but yet much to be feared."

Sir Walter Raleigh was another powerful friend of Spenser, and occasionally visited him in Ireland. It was during one of these visits at Kilcolman Castle, that Spenser read to his guest the first three books of *The Faerie Queene*. Raleigh was delighted with the work, and insisted on Spenser's bringing it to England for immediate publication. The poem appeared in 1590, and was read with eager pleasure by all England. Hallam says, "*The Faerie Queene* became at once the delight of every accomplished gentleman, the model of every poet, the solace of every scholar."

Spenser's exile came to a tragic end. In 1598 Tyrone's Rebellion broke out in the southern part of Ireland. En-



English residents could look for no mercy from the rebels. Spenser was specially disliked by them. His castle was attacked and burned, and his infant child perished in the flames. Overwhelmed by his misfortune and his grief, the poet hastened to London, where he died in January, 1599. There was great pomp at his funeral. "Poets attended upon his hearse, and mournful elegies, with the pens that wrote them, were thrown into his tomb." He was buried in Westminster Abbey, near the grave of Chaucer.

**Character.**—Spenser was a dreamy, imaginative man, who lived much in his own thoughts. Like his poetry, he was gentle and pensive, never ardent or impassioned. No one can read Spenser, however, without knowing him to be a noble and high-minded man, of deep religious feeling. He was like the Puritans in his love for purity of character, while he was very unlike them in his love of beautiful things.

**The Shepherd's Calendar.**—Spenser's first fame was gained by the publication of *The Shepherd's Calendar*. This work is a series of twelve pastoral poems, one for each month, in which, as in Virgil's *Bucolics*, the imaginary talkers discuss moral and political questions. The glimpses of English scenery are often pretty; while the descriptions of the months make it a suitable calendar for a poet. Here is June :—

"The simple air, the gentle warbling wind,  
So calm, so cool, as nowhere else I find;  
The grassy ground with dainty daisies dight,  
The bramble bush, where birds of every kind  
To the waters' fall their tunes attemper right."

On the whole, however, *The Shepherd's Calendar* is dull reading, and we should have heard little of Spenser if he had written nothing else.

**The Faerie Queene** was the great work of Spenser's life. (1.) The poet explained his purpose in a letter prefixed to *The Faerie Queene*.

“To the right noble and valorous Sir Walter Raleigh, Knight.

“Sir, knowing how doubtfully all Allegories may be construed, and this booke of mine, which I have entituled *The Faerie Queene*, being a continued Allegory, or darke conceit, I have thought good, as well for avoyding of jealous opinions and misconstructions, as also for your better light in reading thereof, to discover unto you the generall intention and meaning, which in the whole course thereof I have fashioned. The generall end therefore of all the booke is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in virtuous and gentle discipline. Which for that I conceived shoulde be most plausible and pleasing, beeing coloured with an historicall fiction, the which the most part of men delight to read, rather for variety of matter than for profite of the ensample, I chose the historye of King Arthure, as most fitte for the excellency of his person, beeing made famous by many mens former workes, and also furthest from the daunger of envy, and suspition of present time. . . . I labour to pourtraict in Arthure, before he was king, the image of a brave knight, perfected in the twelve private Morall Vertues, as Aristotle hath devised.”

And so Spenser goes on, “expounding his whole intention in the course of this worke.” “This much, Sir,” he concludes, “I have briefly overronne to direct your understanding to the wel-head of the history.” Spenser had a lofty moral purpose. Beauty of character was as precious to him as the beauty of a poem, a face, or a landscape; and in writing *The Faerie Queene*, he set himself to make a hero of ideal moral beauty.

(2.) Like *The Canterbury Tales*, *The Faerie Queene* was never completed. Signs of fatigue appear long before we reach the end of the poem in its present form, and it is not to be regretted that it remains unfinished. To read the poem with pleasure, we should give ourselves little anxiety about the allegory or the moral. “Let the reader,” says Professor Child, “not trouble himself, therefore, about its architecture, and seek to reduce it to rules of symmetry, or

to any other rules save those of a castle in the air. Let him not concern himself about the allegory, which was dark enough two hundred and fifty years ago, and has since become in many places impenetrable. . . . Let him pass over what he does not like. Spenser will never be read at all, if he is to be diligently perused like the standard histories."

To enjoy *The Faerie Queene*, it is also quite as well not to try to follow the story too closely. Spenser did not succeed in carrying out a complicated plan. The poem rambles over vast fields of knowledge and fancy, one digression leading on to another, till we are farther and farther away from our starting-place, and no nearer to our destination. *The Faerie Queene* annoys an orderly or a hurried reader. He calls the work tedious and diffuse, bewildering and unintelligible. "'Much depends,' says Charles Lamb, 'upon *when* and *where* you read a book. In the five or six impatient minutes before the dinner is quite ready, who would think of taking up *The Faerie Queene* for a stop-gap?' Select rather a June morning," continues Professor Child, "when the brilliant white clouds are sailing slowly through a blue sky, a grassy bank under a tree, looking down a long valley with broken hills in the distance; let mind and body both be at ease, and both be disposed to dream, but not to sleep, and when the influences of nature have had their due effect, open, if you please, at the middle of the Legend of Sir Guyon."

(3.) Spenser is a descriptive, rather than a narrative poet. *The Faerie Queene* is full of stately and gorgeous pictures; it is rich with the splendid costumes and scenery of a by-gone age. The reader with a keen sense of beauty will find something to gratify it on nearly every page of Spenser. He is justly called "the poets' poet," for no writer is more suggestive of poetical ideas (p. 236).

(4.) One of the chief pleasures of reading Spenser is

found in the exquisite music of his verse. His poetry is as rich and sweet in sound as it is luxurious in its pictures. He used a long, lingering stanza, admirably fitted to the spirit of his poem,—named from him the Spenserian stanza.

(5.) Spenser, even in his own day, used antiquated forms of language. He loved all that belonged to the Past, even its quaint words. He wished, moreover, to place his poem in a remote and ideal world, as far away as might be from the language, people, and scenes about him. His writings had no influence upon the English language. People in his own age criticised rather than imitated him. Ben Jonson said, “In affecting the ancients, he writ no language.”

(6.) Spenser has often been said to have been more in sympathy with a past age than with his own. This is true if we look only at his “aged accents and untimely words,” and at his old Celtic story of King Arthur and his Knights; but looking deeper, we shall find in *The Faerie Queene* most of the inspiring ideas of the Elizabethan age. Spenser had strong sympathy with the Reformation; eager delight in the New Learning; and glowing pride in England and Elizabeth.

**Suggestions for Reading.**—First Book of *The Faerie Queene*, Clarendon Press Series;—Spenser (*English Men of Letters*), Chapter V.;—Selections from Lowell’s *Essay on Spenser*;—Whipple’s *Literature of the Age of Elizabeth*,—*Essay on Spenser*.

**In this chapter we have considered:—**

1. *Spenser’s Times.*
2. *His Life.*
3. *His Character.*
4. *The Shepherd’s Calendar.*
5. *The Faerie Queene.*

## CHAPTER III.

### THE RISE OF THE DRAMA.

**The Mysteries and Miracle Plays.**—The dawning of the English dramatic literature can be traced to a period not far removed from the Norman Conquest; for, so early as the twelfth century, short plays were performed, representing the lives of the saints and the most striking events of Bible History. These performances were intended by the clergy for the religious instruction of the common people. In other words, the *miracle plays* were a system of object-lessons to impress upon ignorant minds the stories and the doctrines of the Bible. So it happened that the first English plays were acted in churches, and the first play-writers and actors were priests and monks. The miracle plays were later performed in the church-yard, and still later, in the open squares of the town. By that time they had passed out of the hands of the clergy, and had been taken in charge by the different guilds and trades. The plays were now acted on great movable platforms, which were drawn about on wheels from point to point in the town. Several plays were performed on the same day, one play being the special charge of one trade, perhaps of the tailors or the fishmongers, while the play of Noah's Flood was quite appropriately in charge of the water-dealers and drawers. One of the movable platforms would come to a halt in a central locality, and having performed its play, would move on and give place to another.



The simple and ignorant people saw no impropriety in representing the most sacred beings—martyrs, saints, angels, even the persons of the Trinity. The Devil played a prominent part, and together with a character called Vice, furnished the comic element in the play. The fun consisted chiefly in calling hard names and in dealing blows to the right and left. People had not the literary taste or the sensitive morality which now forbids the use of vulgar and profane language. The miracle plays were so far from being thought profane in their own day, that one of the popes granted a pardon of a thousand days to every person who should “resort peaceably and with good devotion” to the plays at Chester. Apparently there were some spectators even then who did not treat the plays with entire respect, for the pope at the same time calls down a sentence of damnation on any one who presumes to interrupt or disturb the performance.

These plays have no literary merit. We should remember that they were never meant to be read, but were intended as illustrations, as living pictures, from the Bible. Occasionally there is a bit of genuine, if not very delicate humor, as when Noah’s wife refuses to enter the Ark, and there follows the lively scolding and beating that was the highest delight of an audience in those days.

*Noye.* Good wyffe, doe nowe as I thee bydde.

*Noyes Wyffe.* Not or I see more neede,  
Though thou stande all daye and stare.

*Noye.* Lorde, that wemen be crabbed aye,  
And non are meke I dare well saye ;  
That is well sene by me to daye,  
In witnesse of you ichone.

\* \* \* \* \*

Wyffe, come in: why standes thou their?

• Thou arte ever frowarde, I dare well sweare;  
Come in, one Godes name! halfe tyme yt were,  
For feare leste that we drowne.



*Noyes Wiffe.* Yea, sir, sette up your saile,  
 And rowe fourth with evill haile,  
 For withouten fayle  
 I will not oute of this towne;  
 But I have my gossippes everyechone,  
 One foote further I will not gone:  
 The shall not drowne, by Sante John!  
 And I maye save ther life.  
 But thou lett them into thy cheiste,  
 Elles rowe nowe wher thy leiste,  
 And gette thee a new wiffe.

The assistance of Shem, Ham, and Japhet is called in, and there is fine sport as they drive their mother into the ark.

Again, in the play of Abraham and Isaac, there is a touch of real pathos in the dialogue between father and son before the sacrifice. The following extract is in modernized spelling :—

*Abraham.* Now, son, in thy neck this fagot thou take,  
 And this fire bear in thy hand;  
 For we must now sacrifice go make,  
 Even after the will of God's command.  
 Take this burning brand,  
 My sweet child, and let us go;  
 There may no man that liveth upon land  
 Have more sorrow than I have woe.

*Isaac.* Father, father, you go right still;  
 I pray now, father, speak unto me.

*Abraham.* My good child, what is thy will?  
 Tell me thy heart, I pray to thee.

*Isaac.* Father, fire and wood here is plenty;  
 But I can see no sacrifice;  
 What ye will offer fain would I see,  
 That it were done at best advice.

*Abraham.* God shall that ordain that is in heaven,  
 My sweet son, for this offering;  
 A dearer sacrifice may no man name  
 Than this shall be, my dear darling.

*Isaac.* Let be, dear father, your sad weeping;  
 Your heavy looks aggrieve me sore.  
 Tell me, father, your great mourning,  
 And I shall seek some help therefor.

- Abraham.* Alas, dear son, for needs must me  
 Even here thee kill, as God hath sent;  
 Thy own father thy death must be.
- Isaac.* Yet work God's will, father, I you pray,  
 And slay me here anon forthright;  
 And turn from me your face away  
 My head when that you shall off smite.
- Abraham.* Alas! dear son, I may not choose,  
 I must needs here my sweet son kill.  
 My dear darling now must me lose,  
 Mine own heart's blood now shall I spill.  
 Yet this deed ere I fulfil,  
 My sweet son, thy mouth I kiss.
- Isaac.* All ready, father, even at your will  
 I do your bidding, as reason is.

Some idea of these religious dramas may be formed from their titles. The *Creation of the World*, the *Fall of Man*, the story of *Cain and Abel*, the *Crucifixion of our Lord*, the *Play of the Blessed Sacrament*, are still preserved. We find, besides, a great number of subjects taken from the lives and miracles of the saints.

We hear of *mysteries* and *miracle plays*. The *miracle play* was properly the dramatizing of some Scripture story, or of a legend of some saint. The *mystery* set forth any part of the Bible concerned with a mysterious subject, like the Incarnation, the Atonement, or the Resurrection. The names *miracle play* and *mystery* were not, however, kept distinct in England.

The miracle plays were Roman Catholic in their teaching; and in the reign of Henry VIII., when the Reformation was steadily making its way in England, a law was passed prohibiting their performance, "with a view that the kingdom should be purged and cleansed of all religious plays, interludes, rhymes, ballads, and songs, which are equally pestiferous and noisome to the common weal." The miracle plays were performed at Chester as late as 1574. A chronicle is preserved there which mentions this last performance:—

“Sir John Savage Knight being Mayor of Chester, which was the last time they were played, and we praise God and pray that we see not the like profanation of Holy Scripture; but oh, the mercy of God for the time of our ignorance!”

The miracle play is not, however, entirely a thing of the past. It exists to-day in a beautiful and reverent form in the Passion Play of Oberammergau.

**The Moralities.**—Out of the *miracle play* grew the *morality*, which became popular in Chaucer's century. This new drama taught its moral lesson not by a Scripture story, but by an allegory, in which the virtues and vices figured as characters. The play of *Magnificence*, written by John Skelton, may be taken as a specimen. The hero, Magnificence, is eaten out of house and home by a crowd of friends, who bear such names as “Counterfeit Countenance,” “Crafty-conveyance,” “Clooked-collusion,” and “Courtly-abusion.” Magnificence falls into the hands of Adversity and Poverty, and is finally taken possession of by Despair and Mischief, who persuade him to end his life. This he is about to do, when Good Hope stays his hand, and Circumspection and Perseverance bring him back to a right frame of mind.

Nearly all the virtues and vices play a part in the moralities: Good Counsel, Repentance, Gluttony, Pride, Avarice, and the like. To supply the comic scenes, the Devil was still retained, together with the Vice of the earlier plays. Vice continued to act as buffoon, a part which came to be thought necessary in every play, till we see it brought to its greatest perfection in the clowns of Shakespeare.

**First Comedy and First Tragedy.**—By degrees, the vices and virtues of the morality plays became more and more human, till they dropped at last their abstract titles and took every-day English names. The desire to inculcate a

moral lesson gradually died out, and plays were written to amuse, rather than to instruct. So grew up the first comedy and the first tragedy. The first English comedy was *Ralph Royster Doyster*, acted in 1551, and written by Nicholas Udall, master of Eton College. This play, as its name suggests, is lively and rollicking. As a picture of London life in the sixteenth century, it is valuable. The next English comedy, *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, was written by a bishop. The whole play is occupied with the loss of a needle, then a rare and precious possession. "My fair, long, straight neele, that was myne onely treasure," says Gammer Gurton. And her goodman Hodge describes it :—

"Tush, tush, her neele, her neele, her neele, man, 'tis neither flesh nor fish,

A lytle thing with an hole in the end, as bright as any syller,  
Small, long, sharpe at the point, and straight as any pyller."

Through five acts the *dramatis personæ* search for the needle, and the hero even goes so far as to consult the devil about it. At last Hodge himself, on suddenly sitting down, discovers the needle sticking in the garment which Gammer Gurton had been mending. Yet less than forty years after this rude farce was written, English comedy had developed into the beautiful *As You Like It* and the sparkling *Much Ado About Nothing* of Shakespeare.

The first regular tragedy in the English language was the play of *Gorboduc, or Ferrex and Porrex*, written by Thomas Sackville, and acted in 1562 for the entertainment of Queen Elizabeth. The play is written in a monotonous blank verse, and is full of long, stilted speeches. The plot consists of a dismal succession of slaughters. "Gorboduc, who was King of Britain about 600 B.C., divided his realm in his lifetime between his two sons, Ferrex and Porrex. The sons fell a-quarreling. The younger killed the elder. The mother, who loved the elder better, for revenge killed

the younger. The people, moved with the cruelty of this deed, rose in rebellion and slew father and mother. The nobility next assembled, and destroyed the rebels; and afterwards they fell to civil war, in which both they and many of their children were slain, and the land for a long time was almost desolate and miserably wasted."

Again our wonder is excited that, twenty years after the appearance of *Gorboduc*, the English theatre entered upon the most glorious period of its history.

**The First Dramatic Companies.**—Till near the end of the sixteenth century there were no regular theatres. Plays were performed in town-halls, court-yards of inns, cock-pits, and noblemen's dining-halls.

Companies of actors calling themselves the servants of some nobleman whose livery they wore, were formed, and wandered about the country, performing wherever they could find an audience. Protected by the livery of their master against the severe laws which branded strollers as vagabonds, they sought the patronage of the civil authorities. Town records and the household registers of illustrious families abound in entries of permissions granted to such strolling companies, and of moneys given to them. Interesting entries are found in the town records of Stratford-upon-Avon, from which we learn that the players visited that place for the first time in 1569. In the tragedy of *Hamlet*, such a band of strolling players act before the king, and produce one of the most thrilling situations of the drama.

**The Early Theatres.**—In the year 1575, under the powerful patronage of the Earl of Leicester, James Burbage built the first English theatre. The venture proved so successful, that twelve theatres were soon furnishing entertainment to the citizens of London. Of these the most cele-



brated was "The Globe." It was so named because its sign bore the effigy of Atlas supporting the globe, with the motto, in Latin, "All the world's a stage." Shakespeare was one of the proprietors of the Globe Theatre, and it was there that many of his best plays were first acted.

Most of the theatres were entirely uncovered, excepting over the stage, where a thatched roof protected the actors from the weather. The spectators were exposed to sunshine and to storm. The boxes, or "rooms," as they were then styled, were arranged nearly as in the present day; but the musicians, instead of being placed in the orchestra, were in a lofty gallery over the stage. The most remarkable peculiarities of the early English theatres were the total absence of painted or movable scenery, and the necessity that the parts for women should be performed by men or boys, actresses being as yet unknown. A few screens of cloth or tapestry gave the actors the opportunity of making their exits and entrances; a placard, bearing the name of Rome, Athens, London, or Florence, as the case might be, indicated to the audience the scene of the action. Sir Philip Sidney complains bitterly of the absurdities of the stage. He declares that they have Asia at one moment and Africa at the next, and "so many other kingdoms that the player, when he comes in, must ever begin with telling where he is, or else the tale will not be conceived. Now shall you have three ladies walk to gather flowers, and then we must believe the stage to be a garden. By and by we hear news of a shipwreck in the same place; then we are to blame if we accept it not for a rock. Upon the back of that, comes out a hideous monster with fire and smoke, and then the miserable beholders are bound to take it for a cave; while, in the meanwhile, two armies fly in, represented with four swords and bucklers, and then what hard heart will not receive it for a pitched field?"

Certain typical articles of furniture were used. A bed



on the stage suggested a bedroom; a table covered with tankards, a tavern; a gilded chair surmounted by a canopy, and called "a state," a palace; an altar, a church; and the like. A permanent wooden structure like a scaffold, erected at the back of the stage, represented objects according to the requirements of the piece, such as the wall of a castle or besieged city, the outside of a house, or a position enabling one of the actors to overhear others without being seen himself. Meagre as was their stage furniture, one fact still shows that Elizabethan audiences were not indifferent to that part of the play which appealed to the eye. Never have costumes upon the stage been richer or more costly. Slightly worn court dresses were bought by actors. At a time when not more than two hundred dollars was paid for the play itself, four hundred dollars would be paid for an embroidered velvet coat, or one hundred dollars for "a robe to goo invisibell." The costumes were a strange mixture of all countries and ages, but such absurdities did not mar the enjoyment of the uncritical spectator of those days.

The performance began early in the afternoon, and was announced by a flourish of trumpets. The most distinguished patrons of the theatre were seated upon the stage itself, a custom to which our proscenium boxes owe their origin. Dancing and singing took place between the acts; and usually a comic ballad, sung by a clown, closed the entertainment.

**Shakespeare's Early Contemporaries.**—The drama was so popular in the sixteenth century that the writing of plays became the commonest form of literary industry. It was, indeed, the one way in which a man could support himself with his pen. Bright, penniless young literary adventurers flocked about the London theatres. Many of them were wild, reckless men, living from hand to mouth in garrets

and taverns, dashing off a play and spending the proceeds in riotous living. The story of Christopher Marlowe is typical. A Cambridge-bred man of marked talents, he lived a wild London life, drinking, fighting, and writing, till, at the age of twenty-nine, he was killed in a tavern brawl. Marlowe was born in the same year with Shakespeare, and was the greatest of his early contemporaries. Several of his plays are works of great power. The energy and elevation of his verse were appreciated by Ben Jonson, who, in his famous poem about Shakespeare, mentions also "Marlowe's mighty line." Marlowe wrote *Dr. Faustus*, a drama founded on the legend that Goethe used in his great work. *The Jew of Malta*, *Tamburlaine the Great*, and *Edward II.* were other important works of this dramatist. Chapman, Lyly, Peele, Greene, and Kyd were also fellow-dramatists of Shakespeare in his early life. We appreciate the vast play-writing industry of those days, when we learn that one manager records in the course of twelve years two hundred and seventy plays accepted by his theatre ; while we are told that at least forty dramatists were at work in London. In studying Shakespeare, we must never lose sight of the ceaseless activity in play-writing peculiar to his time.

**Suggestions for Reading.**—Richard Grant White's *Rise and Progress of the English Drama* (contained in Vol. I. of White's *Shakespeare*);—Hudson's *Origin and Growth of the Drama in England* (contained in *Shakespeare's Life, Art, and Characters*).

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**In this chapter we have considered:—**

1. *The Mysteries and Miracle Plays.*
2. *The Moralities.*
3. *The First Comedy and Tragedy.*
4. *The First Dramatic Companies.*
5. *The Early Theatres.*
6. *Shakespeare's Early Contemporaries.*

## CHAPTER IV.

### WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

(1564-1616.)

“He was not of an age, but for all time.”—*Ben Jonson*.

“Dear son of memory, great heir of fame.”—*Milton*.

“And he, the man whom Nature selfe had made  
To mock herselfe and Truth to imitate.”—*Spenser*.

“In the time of Elizabeth and James, the theatre was almost the only medium of communication between writers and the people, and attracted to it all those who aimed to gain a livelihood out of the products of their hearts and imaginations. Its literature was the popular literature of the age. It was newspaper, magazine, novel, all in one. It was the Elizabethan *Times*, the Elizabethan *Blackwood*, the Elizabethan *Temple Bar*: it tempted into its arena, equally the Elizabethan Thackerays and the Elizabethan Braddons.”—*Whipple*.

“He is the only writer who can be to us in one brief half hour our jester, our singer, our friend, our consoler, our prophet (but never our priest), our sage,—ourselves. There is no mood of our lives that was not a mood of his mind; no sorrow or joy of our hearts that was not a sorrow or a joy of his brain. His intellect was the abstract of humanity.”—*Richard Grant White*.

“The name of Shakespeare is the greatest in our literature—it is the greatest in all literature. No man ever came near him in the creative powers of the mind; no man ever had such strength at once, and such variety of imagination. Coleridge has most felicitously applied to him a Greek epithet, given before to I know not whom, certainly none so deserving of it,—*μυριάnovς*, the *thousand-souled* Shakespeare.”—*Hallam*.

**Authentic Biography.**—The greatest writer in the history of English Literature has the briefest biography. From the parish records of Stratford, from some old legal documents, and from a few contemporary references, we are

able to arrive at the following facts about William Shakespeare :—

John and Mary Shakespeare were his parents. He was christened in the little town of Stratford-upon-Avon, in Warwickshire, England, the 26th day of April, 1564. Although John Shakespeare could not write his name, he was one of the most important citizens of Stratford, and held one office after another, until he became high bailiff, or mayor. From the date of Shakespeare's baptism, we have no certain knowledge of him, till we find the record of his marriage, in his nineteenth year. He married Anne Hathaway, a woman eight years older than himself. Her home was at Shottery, a pretty village a mile across the fields from Stratford. They had three children. Nothing is known of Shakespeare from this time, till he is heard of in London, in 1592, as a successful actor and author. Our first knowledge of him as a dramatist, comes to us through a foolish pun. Robert Greene was a poor unhappy playwright, who, as he lay dying in his wretched garret, wrote his *Groat's Worth of Wit, Bought with a Million of Repentance*. This was a worthless little pamphlet, that would have been forgotten long ago, had it not contained a reference to Shakespeare. Greene warns his fellow-writers to beware of players: "Yes, trust them not: for there is an upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his tyger's heart wrapt in a player's hide, supposes he is as well able to bumbast out a blanke verse as the best of you: and being an absolute *Johannes factotum*, is in his owne conceit the onely *Shake-scene* in a country." Shakespeare evidently took offense at this stupid and spiteful mention of himself, for he was offered a handsome apology by Chettle, Greene's executor, who had published the pamphlet:—"I am as sory," said Chettle, "as if the originall fault had beene my fault, because my selfe have seene his demeanor no lesse civill, than

he exelent in the qualitie he professes ; besides, divers of worship have reported his uprightnes of dealing, which argues his honesty, and his facetious grace in witting, that approves his art." From this time Shakespeare is heard of as actor, author, and theatre manager, though almost nothing can be learned of his private life. By 1597, he had grown so prosperous as to buy New Place, in Stratford, one of the best houses in the town. In the next year he is referred to as a popular dramatist. Francis Meres, in 1598, wrote a book in which he happened to say : "As Plautus and Seneca are accounted the best for Comedy and Tragedy among the Latines, so Shakespeare among the English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage : for Comedy, witness his *Gentlemen of Verona*, his *Errors*, his *Love labors lost*, his *Love labours wonne*, his *Midsummers night dreame*, and his *Merchant of Venice* ; for Tragedy, his *Richard the 2*, *Richard the 3*, *Henry the 4*, *King John*, *Titus Andronicus*, and his *Romeo and Juliet*." From year to year, plays from Shakespeare's pen appeared, and marriages and deaths took place in his family : that is as much as can be said with certainty. His last years were spent in Stratford, where he died on the 23d of April, 1616. He was buried in the parish church of Stratford. In the wall, above his grave, a monument is erected, containing his bust.\* This bust and the coarse engraving by Droeshout, prefixed to the first folio edition of his works published in 1623, are the most trustworthy of his portraits. But few relics of Shakespeare now remain. The house of New Place was long ago destroyed ; but the garden in which it stood, and, in another street, the house where the poet was born, are preserved.

\* The pavement over his grave bears the following startling inscription :

" Good frend, for Iesvs sake forbear,  
To digg the dvst enclosed heare :  
Bleste be ye man yt spares thes stones,  
And cvrst be he yt moves my bones."



**Traditional Biography.**—He who reads the life of Shakespeare will wish to repeat with his biographer, Mr. Halliwell-Phillips, the beautiful lines of Shakespeare's own sonnet :—

“When to the sessions of sweet silent thought,  
I summon up remembrance of things past,  
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought.”

There have been many attempts to fill the gaps in Shakespeare's history.

(1.) It is highly probable that in his boyhood he went to the Free Grammar School of Stratford. An ancient desk is still shown, said to have been Shakespeare's three centuries ago, when he went

“———with his satchel  
And shining morning face, creeping like snail  
Unwillingly to school.”

His friend Ben Jonson said that he had “small Latin and less Greek”; but it must be remembered that so learned a man as Jonson would have been likely to say the same of any college graduate of our own day. Shakespeare probably had little schooling; but there never lived a man more quick to learn from the world about him, or one made wiser by his knowledge. There seems much to support the guess that when his brief school-days were over, he became a lawyer's clerk; for throughout his works he shows a marked familiarity with the technical language of the law. Other professions also claim him; in fact, he has been assigned to at least twenty-four occupations.

(2.) The most familiar legend of Shakespeare's youth represents him as a wild young fellow, joining in a deer-stealing expedition to Sir Thomas Lucy's park at Charlcote, near Stratford. According to the story, the hot-headed old baronet caused the ringleader, Will Shakespeare, to be seized



and flogged. The youth revenged himself by writing some silly doggerel, which he posted on the park gates. Then, says the legend, the wrath of Sir Thomas grew so formidable that the culprit fled to London. There another tradition takes him up, and relates that he first earned a living in London by holding horses at the doors of the theatres.

(3.) The story of the deer-stealing is not needed to account for Shakespeare's departure from Stratford, to seek his fortune in London. He had a wife and three children to care for, with only his own hand and brain to depend upon. His father had met with one misfortune after another, till he was able to do nothing toward helping his son on in the world. London was the resort for a needy adventurer like Shakespeare; and in London, to a young man with talent and without money, no other calling offered a promise of such quick success as that of the actor. Hundreds of young adventurers, pouring in from the country, began life precisely as we suppose Shakespeare did. It is believed that he not only acted, but that he also re-arranged old plays, added a scene here, cut one out there, brightened the dialogue, and then looked to it that the whole was adapted for practical use on the stage. By acting and by revising other men's plays, Shakespeare, then, discovered his own dramatic genius. Measured roughly, his career as dramatist covered twenty years, the last decade of the sixteenth century and the first decade of the seventeenth.

(4.) Of Shakespeare as an actor there is again no certain knowledge. A tradition says that he played the Ghost in *Hamlet*, and the old servant Adam in *As You Like It*, and that he acted in his friend Ben Jonson's play, *Every Man in his Humour*. We may be sure, from Hamlet's admirable "directions to the players," that Shakespeare himself

understood the theory of acting, and that he was a critic of the most correct taste. We guess, however, that he was no actor. One of his sonnets implies that he had, at least, no love for his art :—

“O, for my sake do you with Fortune chide,  
That did not better for my life provide  
Than public means which public manners breeds.  
Thence comes it that my name receives a brand,  
And almost thence my nature is subdued  
To what it works in, like the dyer’s hand.”

The foremost actor of that day, who first played Shakespeare’s great tragic characters, was Richard Burbage, the original Hamlet, Othello, and Lear.

(5.) As a theatrical manager, Shakespeare appears to have been highly successful. The plays from his own pen, with which he constantly supplied his theatre, made, doubtless, no small part of its success. Before he was fifty, he retired from the Globe Theatre and returned to Stratford with a competence. We know nothing of the manner in which he spent his last quiet years.

**His Sonnets.**—Most students of Shakespeare believe that from his sonnets much may be learned about his private history. Writing in honor of the sonnet, Wordsworth says :

“With this key  
Shakespeare unlocked his heart.”

The sonnets tell a passionate story of love and friendship ; and we can but believe that they reveal to us much of Shakespeare’s inner life and personal character. He becomes more lovable as we see his own power of loving, and as we see how generously he could put himself aside, how nobly he could forgive a wrong. Here is one of the most beautiful of the sonnets :—

"When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,  
 I all alone beweepe my outcast state  
 And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,  
 And look upon myself and curse my fate,  
 Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,  
 Featur'd like him, like him with friends possess'd,  
 Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,  
 With what I most enjoy contented least;  
 Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,  
 Haply I think on thee, and then my state,  
 Like to the lark at break of day arising  
 From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;  
 For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings  
 That then I scorn to change my state with kings."

We hear much of the thrift and prosperity of Shakespeare; in the sonnets we learn, too, that he was often sad and discontented with his lot. These poems possess one marked peculiarity: they remind the reader constantly of Shakespeare's certainty that his verse will live. In his other writings there is not a trace of this; and it is well known that he was inexcusably careless about preserving his plays. But here are such lines as,—

"Do thy worst, old Time; despite thy wrong,  
 My love shall in my verse ever live young."

"Not marble, nor the gilded monuments  
 Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme."

In addition to their personal interest, the sonnets have great literary beauty. They are not of even excellence, but here and there are lines of poetry as exquisite as any in the dramas.

**Early Poems.**—Shakespeare's first writings were not dramatic. By two narrative poems he achieved a position as a poet which he could not have acquired as a "play-actor" or a play-writer. *Venus and Adonis*, published in 1593, was dedicated to his fashionable and agreeable young friend,

the Earl of Southampton. "The first heir of my invention," Shakespeare called this poem, though he had already written several plays. Dramatic writing had, it may be said, no social position. Ben Jonson was laughed at when he named his dramas "Works." *Venus and Adonis* was followed by *Lucrece*, which also became one of the fashionable poems of the day. Both were "mellifluous and honey-tongued," as Meres had said of Shakespeare. To readers of the present day these poems appear far-fetched, over-ingenious, overdone in many ways, but occasional lines make them worthy of Shakespeare.

**Classification of Shakespeare's Plays.**—The first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays, the famous First Folio, was published seven years after his death, in 1623. In this volume the plays were roughly classified as histories, comedies, and tragedies; and such a division has since been followed by many editors. Comedy and tragedy are not so sharply separated, however, by Shakespeare himself. He did not find them divided in human life; accordingly, when he wrote his darkest tragedy, he introduced a comic scene, as in *King Lear*; to his most sparkling comedy, he added a tragic incident, as in *Much Ado About Nothing*. This blending of tragic and comic in the same piece is one of the marked characteristics of the English drama in the age of Elizabeth.

A simple classification of the plays that may be more useful for our purpose is based on the sources from which they were derived. These sources are historical, semi-historical, or fictitious. (1.) One series of historical plays relates to the history of England, and another to that of Rome. The English plays cover nearly all the reigns from Richard II. to Henry VIII. Several dramas deal with the fifteenth century, and with the Wars of the Roses; for Shakespeare understood well the value of civil war as

material for the drama. This confusing period becomes clearer and more thrilling in his pages than in any formal history. His plays are filled with the patriotism of the Elizabethan age, and must forever stir an Englishman's heart with pity for the disasters of his country, or with pride in her glory. Shakespeare's own love of England culminates in the noble play of *Henry V.*, "a splendid dramatic song to the glory of England." Here he presents his portrait of the ideal king in his favorite hero of history, Henry V.

As Shakespeare did not write pure tragedy, neither did he write pure history. Comedy finds its way into the most dignified history; for it is in the play of *Henry IV.* that we find Falstaff, the greatest comic character of English literature.

The materials for his English historical plays were drawn by Shakespeare chiefly from *Holinshed's Chronicle*. The materials for his three great Roman plays he took from *Plutarch's Lives*.

(2.) In addition to the dramas founded on authentic history, Shakespeare wrote several of a semi-historical character. *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *Lear* are among these legendary plays. The story of Hamlet comes from an old Danish chronicler, and is at least half true; Macbeth, Lear, and Cymbeline are founded on ancient Scottish and British legends.

(3.) Nineteen plays of Shakespeare are based on fiction. He never gave himself the trouble to invent a plot. He helped himself to a good story wherever he found it: in an old play, perhaps, or in an Italian novel; in the pages of Plutarch or in the history of his own country. *The Merchant of Venice* is an instance. Shakespeare took three distinct stories, melted them down, and ran them into a new mould of perfect symmetry. The first of the three, the casket story, he probably took from the *Gesta*



*Romanorum*, the great story-book of Europe in the Middle Ages. The incident of the bond and pound of flesh is also found in the *Gesta Romanorum*. This was a very popular story, and occurred again and again in novels and plays of that time. Even the little episode of the rings is a part of the old tale. The other thread of the plot, the story of Lorenzo and Jessica, is also to be found in an Italian novel. One thing may be noticed: although these stories had been told over and over before Shakespeare wrote,—they are found in Latin, Italian, and French as well as in English,—after he had used them, no one else ventured to touch them.

Shakespeare's attention was concentrated on invention not of story, but of character. The superiority of what he invents to what he borrows, may be seen in a play like *Much Ado About Nothing*. This was intended to dramatize the Italian tale of Hero and Claudio. To fill out the play with minor characters, he invented Beatrice and Benedick, and added Dogberry and Verges. Most readers will agree that the interest in the original story is far less than in these creations of Shakespeare.

Some of the thirty-seven dramas attributed to Shakespeare show the traces of another writer. It was the custom of the time for two playwrights to work together,—a custom that has caused great perplexity to students of Shakespeare. They feel sure that the three parts of *Henry VI.* are old dramas merely retouched by him. So, too, the best authorities believe that the last of the historical plays, *Henry VIII.*, was in great part written by Fletcher.

**Chronology of the Plays.**—The arrangement of the dramas in an order approaching that in which they were written, has been one of the problems of recent Shakespeare scholarship. We may arrive at dates for them in several ways: the month and year in which a play was



registered for publication gives an approximate date ; the mention of a work by a contemporary writer, like Meres, is often very valuable ; again, there are in the plays themselves evidences of their chronology that have received careful study. We notice differences of style which make us sure that certain plays were written in youth, and certain others in mature manhood. That which is clearly the earlier writing of Shakespeare is more highly ornamented ; it contains more puns, classical allusions, and far-fetched figures than are found in his later works. The story becomes of less importance in the mature plays, while the characters grow more absorbing. We may also discover differences in the verse itself. The rhyme, of which there is so much in the younger plays, almost disappears, and there are marked changes in the structure of the verse.

**Construction of Plot.**—Shakespeare paid little heed to the dramatic unities of time and place.\* Unity of action he made his chief aim. His skill as a playwright is shown in the success with which he wove together a variety of materials so as to produce oneness and completeness of effect. *The Merchant of Venice* has been mentioned as an example of this skill.

If we examine one of his great tragedies, we see how closely it follows the principles of dramatic construction. The first act states the situation ; in the second, the story grows ; in the third, the grand climax is reached ; the fourth contains the catastrophe that results from the great events of the third act ; the fifth act is the breaking up, or dissolution.

\* Three rules were carefully observed in the composition of a Greek play: 1. That there should be a distinct plot with one main action, to which all the minor parts of the play should contribute. 2. That the incidents of the play should naturally come within one day. 3. That the entire action should naturally occur in one place. These three rules are known as the Unity of Action, the Unity of Time, and the Unity of Place, or as "the dramatic unities."

**Purpose.**—Shakespeare's plays are works of art; he wrote them with an artistic purpose, and with no other. They teach us lessons as life itself does. In no other sense can Shakespeare be said to convey a moral. Certain critics, the Germans especially, would have us believe that each of his plays works out some philosophical idea, that in each some one great truth is to be discovered. Such criticism is far-fetched and unprofitable. Shakespeare probably wrote with a simpler purpose than most of his admirers are willing to acknowledge: he wrote to give himself and others pleasure.

**Treatment of Character.**—It is said that the character of Hamlet has been more discussed than that of any hero of history. The serious consideration and minute analysis to which Shakespeare's characters have been subjected is perhaps the finest tribute to their reality. They are to us living men and women: we argue about them, gossip about them, love them, hate them, as if they were of the same flesh and blood as ourselves. Their reality is partly due to their many-sidedness. They are not mere pictures or mere flat surfaces; they stand out so that we see them on every side. They present to us many phases: one man is not all avarice, another all ambition. A clumsy writer often makes his men and women personifications of vices and virtues, till they are little better than creatures of allegory. But Shakespeare never forgets how mixed and how varied is the nature of man. The variety of characters created by him is indeed amazing. We find in Shakespeare the noblest and purest men and women, and also the meanest and most foolish. "Milton," says Whipple, "can do justice to the Devil, though not, like Shakespeare, to 'poor devils.'" The genius that created Sir Andrew Aguecheek had the same quality as that which produced Hamlet or Lear.

It was by virtue of this intense sympathy, which seems

the union of a powerful imagination with a large heart, that Shakespeare could so forget himself in his characters. For the moment he himself ceased to exist; he *was* Macbeth or Hamlet or Othello. He was so great a dramatist and so true an artist that we lose sight of him completely. To read his character from his plays is pure guess-work. The qualities of the writer are before us, but Shakespeare the man remains forever a mystery.

Shakespeare was separated from his home, and probably lived among men almost exclusively; yet he enters into the natures of women, becomes Portia or Rosalind or Juliet, as readily as he assumes the guise of Shylock or Romeo. This is all the more wonderful when we remember that in drawing these varied types of character, he knew that they would be intrusted in representation to boys or young men, —English women not appearing on the stage before 1661, long after the age which witnessed such creations as Ophelia, Lady Macbeth, Rosalind, and Juliet. The author must himself have felt what he makes Cleopatra say :

“The quick comedians  
Extemporary shall stage us; Antony  
Shall be brought drunken forth, and I shall see  
Some squeaking Cleopatra *boy* my greatness.”

**Nature in Shakespeare.**—Human nature is always first in interest to Shakespeare; yet the outer world is used by him as background with exquisite artistic feeling. Notice “Shakespeare and the side glances that his characters cast at the nature that surrounds them. And these glances are like everything else in him, rapid, vivid, and intense.

‘Lady! by yonder silver moon I swear,  
That tips with silver all the fruit-tree tops.’

How these words shed round us all the loveliness of the

Italian night!" One should notice the weather in which Shakespeare sets his dramas: the hot midsummer of *Romeo and Juliet*; the tempest in *King Lear*; while in *Macbeth*

"Light thickens, and the crow  
Makes wing to the rooky wood;  
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse,  
While night's black agents to their prey do rouse."

**Poetry of Shakespeare.**—Shakespeare was not only a dramatist, great in the construction of a play and in the creation of character, but he was, besides, the noblest of our poets. He had the exquisite sensitiveness, the fervid imagination, and the profound emotion that produce poetry.

**Shakespeare's Influence in the History of our Language** has been powerful and lasting. To him, more than to any other man since Chaucer, the English language is indebted. The common version of the Bible, made in 1611, and the writings of Shakespeare, have been the preservers of English speech. The general reading of two books that are models of simplicity, and of care in the choice of words, has given to the millions of the English-speaking race a rich and fixed vocabulary. It was nearly three centuries ago that Shakespeare wrote, yet we read him to-day to find that, while he made the language of his predecessors obsolete, his own vocabulary has withstood the assaults of time, and is still fresh and vigorous.

**The Shakespearean Dramatists** is a name rightly given to the group of playwrights that surrounded Shakespeare. In many qualities they were Shakespearean. (1.) In Ford's love-plays were tenderness and pathos unsurpassed in his time. His most famous work was *The Broken Heart*; indeed, broken hearts were always his theme. (2.) Webster's greatness lay in his power to excite terror and pity. His

only interest is in crime and suffering, which he depicts with terrible power. *The Duchess of Malfy* is his best known work. (3.) Massinger was a graceful and agreeable writer, to be read, says Charles Lamb, "with composure and placid delight." His play, *The New Way to Pay Old Debts*, containing the character of Sir Giles Overreach, is still well known upon the stage. (4.) The famous literary partners, Beaumont and Fletcher, were strongly under the influence and inspiration of Shakespeare, and several of their plays are so graceful, humorous, and romantic, as to suggest a comparison with comedies like *Much Ado About Nothing* and *As You Like It*. But they are far below Shakespeare in their character-painting. Among their plays are *The Maid's Tragedy*, *Philaster*, and *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*. Fletcher's pastoral drama, *The Faithful Shepherdess*, contains some lovely poetry, and is said to have inspired Milton's *Comus*.

**Ben Jonson** was the most imposing of the later Elizabethan dramatists. Although a warm friend of Shakespeare, Jonson was, of all the writers mentioned, the least in sympathy with his dramatic methods. He was a man of profound learning, powerful mind, and acute observation. His deep respect for the classics led him to follow slavishly the rules of the Greek drama, and to blame Shakespeare unsparingly for his lawless neglect of them. Jonson's method of treating character was also the opposite of Shakespeare's. Instead of presenting the many-sided and complex human nature of real life, he aimed, according to the title of his famous play, to exhibit "every man in his humor," or under the influence of his special peculiarity. The best of his dramas are *Sejanus*, *Catiline*, *The Silent Woman*, and *The Alchemist*.

While Jonson's plays were heavy and lifeless, he strangely enough had great success in the airy and elegant little



dramas called masques. Among the most famous is his *Masque of Queens*. Jonson was also a prose writer. His *Discoveries* contain many valuable notes on books and men,—those on Shakespeare and Bacon being of especial interest.

Ben Jonson was in his time as commanding a figure as Samuel Johnson became a century and a half later. In many respects the two men resembled each other. Both were egotistical, self-willed, and overbearing, yet frank, generous, and social in temper, truly upright and earnest in purpose. At the famous “wit combats” of the Mermaid Tavern, Jonson was the autocrat, as Johnson was afterward monarch of The Club.

**Close of the Elizabethan Drama.**—With these writers the glory of the English drama departed. The passion, imagination, and moral earnestness of the Elizabethan writers had died away. The plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, frivolous in morals and feeble in character-drawing, were the most popular upon the stage from the death of Shakespeare till the Commonwealth. The extinction of the drama was hastened by the breaking out of the Civil War in 1642 and by the enactments of Parliament in 1642, 1647, and 1648, which closed the theatres and suppressed the dramatic profession. From that date until the Restoration, all theatrical performances were illegal.

Upon Cromwell’s death, in 1658, a theatre was re-opened in Drury Lane. With this event began a new chapter in the history of the English stage.

**Suggestions for Reading.**—*Julius Cæsar, As You Like It, Macbeth*, edited by Henry N. Hudson;—Whipple’s *Age of Elizabeth*,—*Essay on Shakespeare and on Characteristics of Elizabethan Literature*;—Lowell’s *Essay on Shakespeare*;—Dowden’s *Primer of Shakespeare*, Chapters I. and II.;—Hudson’s *Life, Art, and Characters of Shakespeare*, the chapters on *Julius Cæsar, As You Like It*, and *Macbeth*.



**In this chapter we have considered :—**

- 1. The Authentic Biography of Shakespeare.*
- 2. The Traditional Biography.*
- 3. The Sonnets.*
- 4. His Early Poems.*
- 5. Classification of His Plays.*
- 6. Chronology of His Plays.*
- 7. Construction of Plot.*
- 8. Purpose.*
- 9. Treatment of Character.*
- 10. Nature in Shakespeare.*
- 11. Poetry of Shakespeare.*
- 12. Influence upon the Language.*
- 13. The Shakespearean Dramatists.*
- 14. Ben Jonson.*
- 15. Close of the Elizabethan Drama.*

## CHAPTER V.

FRANCIS BACON.

(1561-1626.)

“The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind.”—*Pope*.

“The great secretary of nature and all learning.”—*Walton*.

“He had the sound, distinct, comprehensive knowledge of Aristotle, with all the beautiful lights, graces, and embellishments of Cicero.”—*Addison*.

“He may be compared with those liberators of nations who have given laws by which they might govern themselves, and retained no homage but their gratitude.”—*Hallam*.

“Who is there that upon hearing the name of Lord Bacon does not instantly recognize everything of genius the most profound, everything of literature the most extensive, everything of discovery the most penetrating, everything of observation of human life the most distinguishing and refined.”—*Burke*.

“My conceit of his person was never increased towards him by his place or honors; but I have and do reverence him for the greatness that was only proper to himself: in that he seemed to me ever, by his work, one of the greatest men and most worthy of admiration that had been in many ages. In his adversity I ever prayed God would give him strength; for greatness he could not want.”—*Ben Jonson*.

**Prose Writers of the Elizabethan Age.**—The Elizabethan age was the great age of English poetry: prose held but a second place. (1.) Holinshed wrote his *Chronicle*, a history of England and Scotland, from which Shakespeare drew much material. (2.) Sir Walter Raleigh, imprisoned in the Tower, whiled away his time by composing a *History of the World*, beginning with the Creation. (3.) Richard Hooker, a man of piety and vast learning, was the cham-

pion of the principles of the Church of England against the encroachments of Puritanism. The work for which he is famous is *A Treatise on the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, an eloquent argument for the Church of England, set forth in a style dignified and stately. One of the famous sentences of the English literature is found in the first book of *The Ecclesiastical Polity* :—

“Of law there can be no less acknowledged than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world : all things in heaven and earth do her homage ; the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power ; both angels and men, and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy.”

The greatest prose writer of the Elizabethan age was Francis Bacon.

**Bacon's Life.**—Francis Bacon was the younger son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, who was Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of England, and a statesman honored and trusted by Queen Elizabeth. Bacon's mother was a woman strong in mind and in character, and, like many women of that day, she was “exquisitely skilled in the Greek and Latin tongues.”

Bacon was brought up amid surroundings that were dignified, elegant, and refined. He found himself, when a child, of social importance, petted by the Queen herself, who laughed at his bright speeches and called him her little Lord Keeper. His strongest instinct was his devotion to royalty. The story is told that when Bacon was a little boy, the Queen asked him his age. He replied, like a true courtier, “I am two years younger than your Majesty's happy reign.”

Bacon was in boyhood small and delicate, but of remarkably precocious mind. When thirteen years of age, he went to the University of Cambridge. There he began his

career as an independent thinker. He was impatient with the dry and lifeless lessons that he was set to learn. He found philosophy, as he said afterwards, "rather talkative than productive." He was impatient with the instructors who taught over and over again the dogmas of the old philosophy, and who, spite of their powerful, active minds, had not courage to strike out into any new line of thought. Francis Bacon, lad as he was, was fairly tingling with new ideas. His college days could not have been very happy : he despised his tasks and his teachers ; and in his fellow-students he saw men like "becalmed ships, that never move but by the wind of other men's breath, and have no oars of their own to steer withal." He left Cambridge at the age of sixteen ; and, that a finishing touch might be added to his education, his father sent him to Paris as an attaché of the English ambassador. A youth so eager and alert as Bacon advanced rapidly in his knowledge of the world. The boy of seventeen, while in France, was studiously collecting material for his first literary work, on no less a subject than *The State of Europe*.

The death of his father summoned Bacon home from France, and changed completely his position and prospects. He was now a youth of nineteen, without money and without influence, with only his ambition and his intellect to help him in winning his way to eminence. Poverty was a great misfortune to him, for he had been born and bred to luxury ; he loved things costly and beautiful ; he was magnificent as a prince in his tastes. The struggle to gratify these tastes kept him throughout life burdened with debt.

He appears to have started in life with two purposes : first, he intended to achieve worldly success, which to him meant political power and the surroundings of wealth ; and secondly, he was filled with an honest desire for a reformation of learning. He saw that men were not making the best use of their minds, that knowledge was of little prac-

tical value. The desire to be of service to the world by helping it "to rebuild human knowledge from a firm and solid basis" was Bacon's sincere and noble purpose, and was kept steadily in mind during his long and busy political career. In his youth he begged his uncle Burleigh, the Lord Treasurer, that some office, with light duties, and yet with generous compensation, might be given to him, in order that he might have the time and the means for becoming "a pioneer in the deep mines of truth." In one of his letters he said that he had "vast contemplative ends," and that he had "taken all knowledge for his province."

His sturdy old uncle laughed at him, and Bacon turned next to Burleigh's rival, the brilliant and generous Essex, for "influence" was then even more necessary than now to further a young man's fortunes. Essex aided Bacon with lavish gifts of money, and did his best to procure office for him. Years after, when Bacon was so far on in the world as to be the Queen's own lawyer, he was called upon to prosecute his old friend for acts of treason. The charges were proved, and the penalty of death was inflicted. It may have been Bacon's duty as a public official to aid in the prosecution of Essex; but it was his duty as a man to be loyal to an old friendship. A dark suspicion of ingratitude rests upon his memory. History has not satisfactorily excused his conduct; though, on the other hand, the charge that Bacon desperately sought the life of Essex, for the sake of winning Elizabeth's favor, is altogether improbable.

From the time that Bacon was admitted to the bar in 1582, his political career was for many years one of steady advancement. In his profession he was renowned for brilliancy and learning; in the House of Commons he was recognized as a masterly orator.

"There happened in my time one noble speaker who was full of gravity in his speaking. His language, when he could spare or pass

a jest, was nobly censorious. No man ever spoke more neatly, more pressly, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness in what he uttered. No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces. His hearers could not cough or look aside from him without loss. He commanded where he spoke, and had his judges angry and pleased at his devotion. No man had their affections more in his power. The fear of every man that heard him was lest he should make an end." \*

On the coronation of James I., in 1603, Bacon was knighted, and at the same time was married to Alice Barnham, the daughter of a London alderman. He was afterward elected to more than one Parliament, and was appointed Solicitor-General, then Attorney-General, then Lord Keeper, with the title of Baron Verulam, and was finally made Lord-Chancellor and Viscount St. Albans.

Bacon now, at the age of sixty, might be thought to have attained every ambition; when, suddenly, like a thunder-bolt, there fell upon him disgrace and ruin. He was accused and convicted of taking bribes when acting as judge; and, though the gifts he had received had never influenced him to give an unjust decision, that excuse does not clear Bacon's reputation. Nor does it excuse him that bribery and corruption under James I. were the order of the day. He was condemned to lose the chancellorship, to pay a fine of forty thousand pounds, to be imprisoned during the King's pleasure, to be ineligible to any office in the state, and was forbidden to sit in Parliament, or to come within twelve miles of the court. But a remission of these penalties was soon granted, and, in 1624, an annual pension of twelve hundred pounds was bestowed upon him for life.

The life of the fallen minister was prolonged for five years after his disgrace. In spite of his misfortunes and of his pecuniary embarrassments, those were his most fruitful years. He died in 1626. Riding in his carriage one

\* Ben Jonson, referring to Bacon.



spring day, when the snow was falling, it occurred to him that snow might serve as well as salt in preserving flesh. So, stopping at a cabin by the roadside, he bought a fowl, for the purpose of trying the experiment. By the slight exposure he was chilled, and thrown into a sudden and fatal fever. To use the words of Lord Macaulay, "The great apostle of experimental philosophy was destined to be its martyr."

**Bacon's Service to Science.**—The learning to which Bacon found men devoting their minds was learning twenty centuries old, out of which the life was gone. Scholars turned over and over again the old knowledge, and contented themselves with a cunning re-arrangement of learning, which deceived them into thinking that they were growing wiser. They discovered nothing that made the world better off. It was thought beneath the dignity of philosophy to concern itself with practical, every-day matters. Bacon saw the folly of the philosophers. He said to them: Throw down your books; come down out of the clouds. "The only clue and method is to begin all anew, and direct our steps in a certain order, from the very first perceptions of the senses." Look at the world about you; be alert, awake; observe; experiment; set in order your observations and experiments; compare, meditate, and you will by and by discover a new truth of Nature.—Such is the process of Induction. It was no invention of Bacon; it is as old as the mind of man. He merely called men's attention to a power that had been lying idle, that had been supposed to have no share in the higher duties of philosophy. But Bacon would not let a man stop with the discovery of a new law of Nature. To what *use* can he put this truth? How can man's daily life be made more comfortable, more civilized, by this new knowledge? These were the questions that Bacon put.

The object of his method was *fruit*,—the improvement of the condition of mankind. He wished man to become “the minister and interpreter of Nature.” If Bacon could look upon the world to-day, he might see his desire fulfilled. The uses of steam, the services of electricity, are but the *fruit* for which he pleaded so eloquently. He was the inspirer of modern invention and discovery.

Bacon’s great philosophical work was written in Latin, and has therefore properly no place in English literature. Its plan was elaborate, and the work was never finished. Its most important division was the *Novum Organum*, that is, the new instrument, or the new method, to be adopted in searching after truth. But it was not in the laying down of a specific method that Bacon was useful to the world; it was because he brought philosophy “home to men’s business and bosoms,” and taught the world the doctrine—now so familiar—that Nature and Science are the servants of man.

**Bacon’s Essays.**—Great as the influence of his other writings may once have been, Bacon’s charm for readers of this age lies in the little volume of his *Essays*. This book is one of the classics of the English language. Hallam says, “It would be derogatory to a man of the slightest claim to polite letters, were he unacquainted with the *Essays* of Bacon.” The first edition, containing ten essays, appeared in 1597, in that famous decade of English literature which produced Shakespeare’s comedies and Spenser’s *Faerie Queene*. The number of essays grew in time from ten to fifty-eight. They are short papers, often only a page or two in length, but so pressed down and running over with thought that the number of their pages is no measure of what they contain. (1.) The essays discuss a great variety of subjects, for example: Death, Adversity, Atheism,

Travel, Gardens, Ambition, Friendship. There seemed to be no subject which would not stir Bacon's mind to activity, and to the production of energetic and original thought. (2.) He was, besides, a man so learned that he had vast stores of other men's thought to draw from. His familiarity with the Bible and with the Greek and Roman classics, his apt allusions, quotations, and illustrations enrich every essay. Bacon came, in turn, to be quoted oftener than any other English essayist. To our own day, every man feels that he gives weight to his utterance if he can support it by a sentence from Bacon. (3.) This constant quotation is due in great measure to Bacon's wonderful condensation of thought. There is no clearer mark of a powerful intellect than such compression. What another man might have taken pages to say, Bacon reduced to one portable, useful sentence. Material for a score of essays has been found in the two pages that he wrote on Studies. (P. 253). (4.) Bacon, spite of his practical bent, was a man of imagination. Like the age in which he lived, and like his great contemporary, Shakespeare, he combined reason and imagination, the practical and the ideal. In a bold metaphor we often find him conveying an argument ; or under a beautiful simile may lie the closest reasoning. " Prosperity," says Bacon, " is the blessing of the Old Testament ; adversity is the blessing of the New. . . . Certainly virtue is like precious odors, most fragrant when they are incensed or crushed ; for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue."

(5.) The style of Bacon's *Essays* is that of a note-book : short, strong, rugged, abrupt, disjointed. We do not find the smoothly gliding sentences of modern English prose. Bacon wrote when our prose was young and unformed : his style is crude, and at the same time full of bold strength and originality. What Ben Jonson said of his speaking

was equally true of his written *Essays*: “No man ever spoke more neatly, more pressly, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness, in what he uttered.”

**Suggestions for Reading:**—Bacon’s *Essays on Truth, Death, Adversity, Atheism, Travel, Friendship, Riches, Ambition, Praise, Anger*;—Selections from Macaulay’s *Essay on Bacon*;—Whipple’s *Literature of the Age of Elizabeth*,—*Essays on Bacon*;—Saintsbury’s *Elizabethan Literature*, page 207.

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**In this chapter we have considered:—**

1. *Prose Writers of the Elizabethan Age.*
2. *Bacon’s Life.*
3. *His Service to Science.*
4. *His Essays.*

## CHAPTER VI.

JOHN MILTON.

(1608-1674.)

“O mighty-mouth’d inventor of harmonies,  
O skill’d to sing of time or eternity ;  
God-gifted organ-voice of England—  
Milton, a name to resound for ages.”—*Tennyson*.

“The first place among our English poets is due to Milton.”—*Addison*.

“Three poets in three distant ages born,  
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn :  
The first in loftiness of thought surpassed ;  
The next in majesty ; in both the last.  
The force of nature could no further go ;  
To make a third she joined the other two.”—*Dryden*.

“Was there ever anything so delightful as the music of the *Paradise Lost*? It is like that of a fine organ ; has the fullest and the deepest tones of majesty, with all the softness and elegance of the Dorian flute.”—*Cowper*.

“John Milton was the last of the Elizabethans.”—*Stopford Brooke*.

“There are no such vistas and avenues of verse as Milton’s. In reading *Paradise Lost*, one has a feeling of spaciousness such as no other poet gives. He showed from the first that larger style which was to be his peculiar distinction.”—*Lowell*.

**Milton’s Contemporaries.**—“Thy soul was like a star and dwelt apart,” said Wordsworth. This was true of Milton in his relation to the literary as well as to the social and moral life of his time. He dwelt apart from the other poets of the seventeenth century, uninfluenced by them and unappreciated by them. He is never associated with that



group of writers who, in their own day, were supposed to represent the poetry of their century. He had nothing in common with Donne, Waller, and Cowley. These men are interesting to the student of the history of English poetry; but in themselves, they are now of little importance to the general reader. They had wit, elegance, and musical versification, but these qualities, as the history of literature proves, are not enough to keep poetry alive. Of the other poets of this century, the hymns of "holy George Herbert" are still loved and sung; Quarles' *Emblems* is one of the curiosities of our libraries; Herrick's graceful and musical verses have, perhaps, a quainter charm than when they were first written; Butler's *Hudibras*, a witty satire upon the Puritans, has brilliant passages and well-known lines, but is wearisome reading, as a whole. The great John Dryden, as we shall see, belonged to an age of poetry altogether different from that of Milton.

**Life.**—(1.) John Milton was born December 9, 1608. His father was a London scrivener, an able and industrious man, who, though a Puritan, was a lover of art and literature. He was not long in finding out the wonderful promise of his son, and did what few fathers of geniuses have done—set the child apart for a literary career, giving him a special and careful training.

"My father destined me, while yet a child," says Milton, "to the study of polite literature, which I embraced with such avidity, that from the twelfth year of my age I hardly ever retired to my rest from my studies till midnight—which was the first source of injury to my eyes, to the natural weakness of which were added frequent headaches."

(2.) At the age of sixteen Milton was admitted to Christ's College, Cambridge, where he led an independent life, liking and disliking what he chose, devouring the classics,

and the poetry of all literatures, and rejecting the mathematics and metaphysics that made a large part of a Cambridge education. While at college he wrote *At a Solemn Music* and the *Hymn on the Nativity*.

(3.) Milton went home from Cambridge "regretted by most of the Fellows, who held him in no ordinary esteem." His father, still watchful of his son's future, secured him a life of leisure at Horton, in Buckinghamshire. There, in the midst of a quiet and beautiful country, Milton for five years led the ideal life of a young poet. His long days were spent in reading, study, and the indulgence of his passionate love for music. One fancies that *Il Penseroso* shows Milton in one of his most frequent moods; and that it was he himself who loved to

"———walk unseen  
On the dry, smooth-shaven green ;"

or sought the

"———arched walks of twilight groves,  
And shadows brown that Sylvan loves."

"There," he says,

" In close covert by some brook,  
Where no profaner eye may look,  
Hide me from day's garish eye."

It was while at Horton that Milton wrote this poem, and its beautiful companion, *L' Allegro*. There he wrote, also, *Comus*, *Arcades*, and *Lycidas*.

(4.) From very early youth, Milton seems to have been conscious of a high destiny. He had an exalted sense of obligation; it was as if he bore a divine message, and the sacred duty of his "Father's business" were upon him. Milton had the self-reliance that in so great a genius is sublime, but in common minds is ridiculous and offensive. He writes from Horton to his friend Diodati

that he is "thinking of immortality"; the "wings are already growing" that in time are to "soar above the Aonian mount."

(5.) Milton could never have fulfilled such a destiny if he had not enlarged his experience beyond the circle of Horton. The fortunate young poet took a further step in his development when he set out upon a tour of the Continent. He visited the great towns of Italy, then the centres of art, beauty, and culture. He was furnished with influential introductions, and was everywhere welcomed with respect and admiration. He made acquaintance with the most illustrious men of Europe, among them Galileo, "then grown old, a prisoner to the Inquisition." At Paris he was entertained by Grotius, "the first of living Dutchmen"; at Florence he was received into the literary societies, and gained the praise of wits and scholars by his Latin poems and Italian sonnets. His plans for further travel were suddenly abandoned upon the news of the rupture between Charles I. and the Parliament; "for," he says, "I thought it base to be traveling for amusement abroad while my fellow-citizens were fighting for liberty at home."

(6.) He watched his opportunity to join in the conflict that was rending Church and State. Milton's daily occupation on returning to London, was the teaching of his nephews, and the sons of gentlemen who were his intimate friends. Meanwhile the political situation grew every day more serious, till he could withhold his voice no longer. He felt himself commanded by his conscience to "embark in a troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes." He put aside his dearest purposes, and for twenty years gave up his life as poet for that of pamphleteer. For twenty years he was the most powerful writer of the Republican party. Yet "I should not choose this manner of writing," said Milton, "wherein, knowing myself inferior to myself (led by the

genial power of nature to another task), I have the use, as I may account, but of my left hand."

Famous among Milton's prose writings is the noble *Areopagitica*; or, *Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing*, an eloquent plea for the freedom of the press. (P. 265). He defended the execution of Charles I. in several powerful pamphlets. When the restoration of Charles II. was in prospect, Milton again put forth a series of pamphlets protesting against the return of the Stuarts.

(7.) Milton was a bold thinker on many subjects. In 1644 he turned his attention to one in which his private happiness was involved. In 1643, after a brief courtship, he had married Mary Powell, the daughter of an Oxfordshire royalist. After one month's experience of the austere gloom of a Puritan household, the bride left her unsocial husband to his studies, and sought the merriment of her father's home. When Milton wrote requesting her to return, she ignored his letter; his messenger she treated ungraciously. Making up his mind that his bride had forsaken him, he wrote his famous papers in favor of divorce. The estrangement continued for two years, and then, learning that her husband was about to illustrate his faith in his own doctrines by marrying again, Mary Milton repented with all due humility. So thoroughly was she forgiven, that her husband's house was opened as a refuge for her family when the Civil War drove them into poverty and distress.

(8.) In 1649 Cromwell had appointed Milton his Latin secretary. All State papers were written in Latin, and the office required a man not only of accurate and elegant scholarship, but of sound judgment and tact. Milton performed his duties with zeal and ability, and remained secretary to the end of the Commonwealth. While holding this office, he undertook the most famous of his controversies, with the Dutch scholar, Salmasius. Milton's work

in the preparation of his argument hastened the loss of sight that had threatened him for years. Before 1654 he was totally blind.

Through tracts and letters, Milton had opposed to the last the return of the monarchy. The Restoration was the signal for his distress and persecution. A proclamation was issued against him, and for a time his fate was uncertain; but he lived in concealment until the passing of the Act of Indemnity placed him in safety. From that time till his death he lived in retirement, busily occupied in the composition of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*. On the 8th of November, 1674, Milton died. He was buried in Cripplegate Church-yard. His first wife had died, leaving him three daughters; his second, Katharine Woodcock, died in 1658, after little more than a year's marriage; but the third, Elizabeth Minshull, whom he espoused in 1664, survived him for more than half a century.

**Three Periods of his Literary Career.**—Milton's literary career divides itself into three periods,—that of his youth, that of his manhood, and that of his old age. The first may be roughly stated as extending from 1623 to 1640; the second from 1640 to 1660, the date of the Restoration; and the third from the Restoration to the poet's death, in 1674. During the first of these he produced most of his minor poetical works; during the second he was chiefly occupied with his prose controversies; and in the third we see him slowly elaborating the *Paradise Lost*, the *Paradise Regained*, and the *Samson Agonistes*.

**The First Period.**—(1.) On Christmas morning of 1629, at daybreak, Milton conceived the *Hymn on the Nativity*. He was then but twenty-one years of age. This noble Christmas hymn, with its grave and elevated subject, the beauty of its words, and the music of its verse, was a



worthy prelude to *Paradise Lost*. We see already that Milton loved sacred and lofty themes, that the words he chose were majestic and lovely; and we already hear the organ music rolling through his verse. In all his poetry, a glad event is welcomed with music. So, when Christ is born :—

“The helmed cherubim  
And sworded seraphim  
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings display’d,  
Harping in loud and solemn quire,  
With unexpressive notes to Heav’n’s new-born Heir.

Such Music (as ’tis said)  
Before was never made,  
But when of old the sons of morning sung;  
While the Creator great  
His constellations set,  
And the well-balance’d world on hinges hung,  
And cast the dark foundations deep,  
And bid the weltring waves their oozy channel keep.

Ring out ye crystal spheres,  
Once bless our human ears,  
(If ye have power to touch our senses so),  
And let your silver chime  
Move in melodious time;  
And let the base of Heav’n’s deep organ blow:  
And with your ninefold harmony  
Make up full consort to th’ angelic symphony.”

The music of heaven was a favorite theme with Milton. The exquisite early poem, *At a Solemn Music*, again anticipates *Paradise Lost*. There he describes the “saintly shout and solemn jubilee” of heaven :

“Where the bright seraphim in burning row  
Their loud uplifted angel trumpets blow,  
And the cherubic host in thousand quires  
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,  
With those just spirits that wear victorious palms,  
Hymns devout and holy psalms  
Singing everlastingly.”

(2.) The sweet rural sights and sounds of Horton found their way into the poems that Milton wrote there. They are calm and lovely, rather than sublime and powerful. Perhaps the best known and best appreciated of all his works are the beautiful companion pieces, *Il Penseroso* and *L'Allegro*. These titles may be translated *the thoughtful mood* and *the joyous mood*; and the poems, accordingly, describe life, Nature, occupations, and amusements as they appear to a man in his gay moments, and then again as they look to him in his serious and meditative moods. Both are quiet poems: *L'Allegro* is not passionate joy, but calm cheerfulness; *Il Penseroso* is serious, not melancholy. In this they probably show truly the character of Milton. *L'Allegro* is the mood of broad daylight, and begins gayly with "the dappled dawn," when

"———the lark begins his flight,  
And singing startles the dull night!"

And passing through the wholesome pleasures of a country day, "till the livelong daylight fail,"

"———to bed they creep,  
By whispering winds soon lull'd asleep."

Music is one of the delights of *L'Allegro*:

" And ever against eating cares,  
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,  
Married to immortal verse;  
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,  
In notes with many a winding bout  
Of linked sweetness long drawn out;  
With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,  
The melting voice through mazes running;  
Untwisting all the chains that tie  
The hidden soul of harmony."

*Il Penseroso* is the mood of twilight and darkness,

ushered in by the even-song of the nightingale. It is the mood of the scholar who would walk unseen :

“ Or let my lamp at midnight hour  
Be seen in some high lonely tow’r.”

Puritan though he is, nothing so harmonizes with Milton’s meditative mood as the subtle influence of a grand cathedral :

“ But let my due feet never fail  
To walk the studious cloisters pale,  
And love the high embowed roof,  
With antique pillars, massy proof,  
And storied windows, richly dight,  
Casting a dim, religious light.  
There let the pealing organ blow  
To the full-voic’d quire below,  
In service high, and anthems clear,  
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,  
Dissolve me into ecstasies,  
And bring all Heav’n before mine eyes.”

(3.) *The Masque of Comus* was written in 1634. It was performed by amateur actors, at Ludlow Castle, before the family and guests of the Earl of Bridgewater. But *Comus* was written with a deeper purpose than merely to amuse a gay company. The ugliness of vice and the loveliness and sanctity of virtue is Milton’s theme. The lady in her angelic purity moves safely through the rabble rout of *Comus’* crew. The central thought of the poem is expressed in the lines :—

“ He that has light within his own clear breast  
May sit i’ th’ centre, and enjoy bright day;  
But he that hides a dark soul, and foul thoughts,  
Benighted walks under the midday sun;  
Himself is his own dungeon.”

The poem is dramatic in form, but Milton was lacking in dramatic power. He could not create men and women,

or make them talk and act. The characters of *Comus* all sing rather than speak; the poem is almost purely lyrical. Nothing could surpass the music of its song, the beauty of its poetry, or the elevation of its thought.

(4.) *Lycidas* is an elegy, a tribute to the memory of a college companion. Young Edward King had been lost at sea on a voyage to Ireland, and his college friends had made up a volume of verse in his memory, to which Milton, though not one of his intimate friends, was asked to contribute. *Lycidas* is not an outburst of passionate grief; it is a lament for the death of a youth of promise rather than the expression of personal sorrow. The form of the poem is that of a Greek pastoral, which, to modern taste, is stiff, cold, and affected. Once reconciled to this, the reader discovers a poem of rare beauty. The poet makes Nature lament the death of the young shepherd:

“——the woods, and desert caves,  
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o’ergrown,  
And all their echoes mourn.”

He calls upon the vales, and bids them

“——hither cast  
Their bells, and flow’rets of a thousand hues.  
Bid Amaranthus all his beauty shed,  
And daffadillies fill their cups with tears,  
To strew the laureat hearse where Lycid lies.”

**Second Period.**—For twenty years after writing *Lycidas*, Milton turned aside from poetry. Now and then he wrote a sonnet, but his time and thought were almost wholly given to the struggle that was going on between the Republic and the Monarchy, between Puritanism and the Church of England. Milton was an eager, even an angry, partisan, and while, during these years, we may admire the eloquence and passionate ardor of the writer, we regret the

temper of the man. We lament the poet's loss of dignity when Milton bursts into a frenzy of invective, and denounces his enemy as *fool, knave, maniac*.

Most readers of Milton would agree with Mr. Lowell :—

“His prose is of value because it is Milton's, because it sometimes exhibits in an inferior degree the qualities of his verse, and not for its power of thought, of reasoning, or of statement. It is valuable, where it is best, for its inspiring quality.”

Milton's stately sentences are Latinic in their construction, slow and solemn in their movement. His style belongs to a by-gone fashion of English prose, but is a magnificent specimen of the old use of the English language.

**The Third Period.**—From his early youth it had been Milton's purpose to write a great poem. Like Wordsworth, he looked upon himself as a “dedicated Spirit.” He searched for many years for the subject he desired; he thought at one time of the story of King Arthur, and again meditated some theme from Bible history. The Puritans of Milton's time thought and talked much of Scripture subjects, and made the language of the Bible their daily speech. Undoubtedly their influence drew Milton toward a religious subject. Lamartine called *Paradise Lost* “the dream of a Puritan who has fallen asleep over the first pages of his Bible.”

When traveling in Italy, Milton, it is said, saw an absurd drama whose plot was the story of Adam and his Fall. This gave him the hint of a sublime tragedy, which he intended to write in imitation of the Greek drama. He felt, however, his lack of dramatic power, and found his subject expanding steadily in his imagination, till *Paradise Lost* slowly grew into an epic. During the years of political strife, his great purpose was never absent from him. No poem has ever been written with more



solemn deliberation, or with a more sacred sense of responsibility. It was, says Milton, "a work not to be raised from the heat of youth, or the vapours of wine, . . . but by devout prayer to that eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his Seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases." No writer has looked to Heaven more devoutly for a blessing on his work. His sublime invocation prays :

"What in me is dark  
Illumine, what is low raise and support;  
That to the highth of this great argument  
I may assert Eternal Providence,  
And justify the ways of God to men."

The composition of *Paradise Lost* occupied about seven years, from 1658 to 1665. It was first published in 1667.

There is no spectacle in the history of literature more touching and sublime than Milton, blind, poor, and persecuted, "fallen upon evil days and evil tongues, in darkness and with dangers compassed round," retiring into obscurity to compose the immortal epics, *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*. It was a sublime courage that could

"———argue not  
Against Heav'ns hand or will, nor bate one jot  
Or heart or hope ; but still bear up, and steer  
Right onward."

"I do not even complain of my want of sight ; in the night with which I am surrounded, the light of the divine presence shines with a more brilliant lustre. God looks down upon me with tenderness and compassion, because I can now see none but himself. Misfortune should protect me from insult, and render me sacred ; not because I am deprived of the light of heaven, but because I am under the shadow of the divine wings, which have enveloped me with this darkness."

As Milton sat with eyes closed forever upon this world,

his imagination took perhaps a higher flight than if he had had his outward sight. He beheld more vividly the horror of "the dark unbottomed infinite abyss," or the serene loveliness of Paradise, or the blinding light of Heaven itself.

The blind old poet, we are told, would compose in his mind forty or fifty lines, and would then dictate them to his daughters. So his friends would find him, "in a small chamber, hung with rusty green, sitting in an elbow chair, and dressed neatly in black; pale, but not cadaverous; his hands and fingers gouty."

(1.) *Paradise Lost* (a.) has the advantage of a subject that forever concerns every human being—man's struggle with evil. The disadvantage of this subject, on the other hand, is the fact that Milton's supernatural beings, his Heaven and his Hell, require from the reader a greater effort of imagination than most men are capable of. In this long poem there are no real people or places; there is nothing for a literal reader to fasten upon. He may admire detached passages of *Paradise Lost*, but the poem, as a whole, wearies him. Adam and Eve have little reality as man and woman. They stand together for humanity. The real hero of *Paradise Lost* is mankind.

(b.) Without doubt, the most interesting personage is Satan, but the purpose of Milton was not to trace his fortunes, but those of the human race. The Satan of Milton is one of the great creations of literature. He is no vulgar devil, but an archangel, though archangel ruined. We see him at first splendid in pride, courage, and physical beauty.

" He above the rest  
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,  
Stood like a tow'r; his form had yet not lost  
All her original brightness, nor appear'd  
Less than archangel ruin'd, and th' excess  
Of glory obscur'd."

(c.) Not only is Milton's theme sublime, but his lan-

guage is equally imposing in its grandeur. His words are the most sonorous and impressive that the English tongue can furnish. Milton's sensitive ear matched the sound to the sense, so that his great poem contains a succession of fine musical effects. Says Landor: "After I have been reading the *Paradise Lost* I can take up no other poet with satisfaction. I seem to have left the music of Handel for the music of the street."

(d.) Every page of Milton reminds us of his learning. Only a reader familiar with classical and Biblical literature feels the full force of his allusions; and even such a reader often has his attention wasted in the effort to trace obscure references. This overloading with allusion was an Elizabethan fault that clung to Milton.

(2.) Among Milton's friends was Thomas Ellwood, a Quaker, and to him Milton one day handed a MS., asking him to read it with care. Upon returning it, Ellwood said, "Thou hast said much here of *Paradise Lost*, but what hast thou to say to *Paradise Found*?" This question suggested to Milton the writing of *Paradise Regained*. By general consent the second epic is placed far below the first in point of interest and variety; still, it displays much of the solemn grandeur and lofty imagination of the earlier poem. Christ's Temptation in the Wilderness is the theme, and the narrative of that incident, as recorded in the fourth chapter of St. Matthew's gospel, is closely followed. This poem is said to have been preferred to the grander epic in the esteem of the poet himself.

(3.) The noble and pathetic tragedy of *Samson Agonistes* belongs to the close of Milton's literary career. It is constructed according to the strictest rules of the Greek drama. In the character of the hero, his blindness, his sufferings, and his resignation to the will of God, Milton has given a most touching representation of his own old age. (P. 261.)

**Character of Milton.**—Although we know much about Milton, we do not know him. Men did not dare approach him with their friendship while he lived, and he seems to this day almost as difficult of access. He was not a genial, lovable man. His blindness or the persecution of his enemies he could endure with sublime courage, but he could not bear the little trials of his own home. We would rather forget his family life and remember him only in relation to ourselves. In the solitude of his study the poet Milton is most impressive.

“Thy soul was like a star and dwelt apart;  
 Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea—  
 Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free;  
 So didst thou travel on life's common way  
 In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart  
 The lowliest duties on herself did lay.”

**Suggestions for Reading.**—*Ode on the Nativity, L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, Comus, Sonnet on his Blindness, Sonnet to Cyriack Skinner, upon his Blindness, Paradise Lost, Books I. and IV.*—Clarendon Press Series, Vol. I.;—Stopford Brooke's *Milton*;—Selections from Macaulay's *Essay on Milton*;—Selections from Lowell's *Essay on Milton*.

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**In this chapter we have considered:—**

1. *Milton's Contemporaries.*
2. *The Life of Milton.*
3. *The First Period of his Literary Career.*
4. *The Second Period.*
5. *The Third Period.*
6. *His Character.*

## CHAPTER VII.

JOHN BUNYAN.

(1628-1688.)

“*Pilgrim’s Progress*, in its imagination, fervor, and poetry, and in its quality of naturalness, belongs to the spirit of the Elizabethan times.”—*Stopford Brooke*.

“ Ingenious dreamer! in whose well-told tale  
Sweet fiction and sweet truth alike prevail ;  
Whose humorous vein, strong sense, and simple style  
May teach the gayest, make the gravest smile ;  
Witty and well employed, and like thy Lord  
Speaking in parables his slighted word.”—*Cowper*.

“Though there were many clever men in England during the latter half of the seventeenth century, there were only two great creative minds. One of those minds produced the *Paradise Lost*, the other, the *Pilgrim’s Progress*.”—*Macaulay*.

**Religious Writers of the Seventeenth Century.**—The Civil War of the seventeenth century was a religious as well as a political contest ; and the prose literature of that time exhibits a strong religious character.

Among the theological writers of the seventeenth century was (1.) William Chillingworth, an eminent defender of Protestantism against the Church of Rome. (2.) Sir Thomas Browne was a learned physician, who is best known as the author of *Religio Medici*. He is an eccentric and original writer, quaint in thought and style. (3.) Thomas Fuller was a clergyman, who wrote much on religious subjects, but who is most famous for his *Worthies of England*. This work consists of biographical notices of eminent Englishmen, with descriptions of the scenery,



antiquities, and other matters of interest connected with their shires. It is a treasury of racy and interesting anecdotes. (4.) Jeremy Taylor was the greatest theological writer of the English Church at this period. He was an eloquent preacher and writer, a man powerful in argument, and lofty and imaginative in style. The critic Jeffrey called him "the most Shakespearean of our divines." (5.) Richard Baxter was an indefatigable writer, but of his one hundred and sixty-eight publications, only *The Saint's Everlasting Rest* is now widely known. Of all the religious writers of the seventeenth century, the one who in our day is most read and loved is John Bunyan.

**Life of Bunyan.**—The story of Bunyan's life has helped to make him popular. People rejoice in the literary success of a man born and bred so poor, humble, and ignorant.

He was the son of a Bedfordshire tinker, and followed his father's trade until his eighteenth year. He then served for a few months in the Parliamentary army. Returning to his native village, Elstow, he married "one as poor as himself." He says that "they had neither dish nor spoon betwixt them." Until this time, Bunyan had led the ordinary life of a thoughtless, uneducated village lad, who saw no harm in swearing, beer-drinking, rough sports, and practical jokes. His young wife was a devout woman, and she sought his reformation. By inducing him to read two religious books bequeathed to her by a dying father, and by leading him to the church of which she was a member, she succeeded in awakening his anxiety concerning the future life. Once aroused, his sensitive and imaginative soul could not rest. For about two years his mind was in a state of intense gloom, tormented with fears for his eternal welfare, and perplexed with the religious questions of the day. Finally, by what he always thought a miracle from Heaven, his soul found peace.

The history of his experience he gives in the religious autobiography, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, written in prison. While he journeyed about the country as a tinker, he told his own story, and preached the way, the truth, and the life, that he himself had found. His fervent piety and rude eloquence gained him wide reputation, and he became a leader among the Baptists. He was such a power in the land that the king began to fear him ; for all Puritans were regarded by Charles II. as Republicans at heart. In 1660, Bunyan was arrested, and shut up in Bedford jail. There he remained twelve years, steadfastly refusing to buy his freedom with the promise not to preach. "Will your husband leave preaching?" the judge asked Bunyan's wife. "My lord," she answered, "he dares not leave preaching so long as he can speak."

These years in prison were spent in working for the support of his family, and in writing religious books. *Pilgrim's Progress* was written in Bedford jail, to "divert Bunyan's vacant seasons," but was not published until 1678, when he had left his prison. In 1672, a royal proclamation of religious toleration was issued, and Bunyan was set free. He had already been chosen preacher of the Baptist congregation in Bedford, and he now entered zealously upon his duties. The fame of his sufferings, his genius as a writer, and his power as a speaker, gave him unbounded influence in his own church ; while the beauty of his character and the liberality of his views won for him the esteem of all sects. His labors as preacher and pastor extended over the whole region between Bedford and London. He died in London, in 1688, after the exposure and fatigue of a journey which he had undertaken for the benevolent purpose of reconciling a father and son.

**The Pilgrim's Progress from this World to that which is to Come** relates the experience of a Christian in leaving

behind a life of sin and seeking the life of everlasting bliss.

(1.) Christian, dwelling in the City of Destruction, is filled with an agonizing sense of his sinful state, and determining to abandon his present life, sets out for the New Jerusalem. The adventures of his journey, the scenes through which he passes, the friends and fellow-pilgrims whom he finds upon the road, are minutely set forth. The story is one that a boy may delight in as an exciting tale of adventure, or that an old man may read and find therein the deepest experiences of his life. It is a book that should be read in childhood and again in manhood.

(2.) The characters of *Pilgrim's Progress* are rude but life-like. They are simply Bunyan's friends and neighbors; they speak and behave like the plain, substantial village folk of Bedford. He had a shrewd eye for character, and a novelist's skill in portraying the men and women whom he saw about him.

(3.) But Bunyan's purpose was more than to tell an interesting story or to produce artistic creations of character. In all his writing, he is the fervent preacher. He thinks only of the need of sinners, never of Bunyan the writer. This makes him simple, direct, and appealing. He was passionately in earnest, and to his earnestness he added the power of a glowing imagination. Much of his inspiration he gained from the Bible, which he knew almost by heart. He had read but few books; the Bible and Fox's *Book of Martyrs* formed his entire library during the twelve years of his imprisonment.

(4.) The *Pilgrim's Progress* is a book for the common people, but the most cultivated taste sees its literary excellence. Bunyan's style was strong, plain, and clear. Its large proportion of Saxon words is noticeable; it is often picturesque and poetical. Macaulay says that "the style is delightful to every reader, and invaluable as a study to

every person who wishes to obtain a quick command over the English language. The vocabulary is the vocabulary of the common people. There is not an expression, if we except a few technical terms of theology, which would puzzle the rudest peasant. We have observed several pages which do not contain a single word of more than two syllables."

(5.) The popularity of *Pilgrim's Progress* has been remarkable. It has been translated into every language which contains a religious literature.

*The Holy War*, another allegory by Bunyan, tells of the siege and capture of the City of Mansoul, and describes the strife between sin and goodness in the human spirit. The story is far less interesting than *The Pilgrim's Progress*. (P. 267.)

**Other Famous Books of the Seventeenth Century.**—Several other famous books belong to the seventeenth century. (1.) Isaac Walton's *Compleat Angler* is an old favorite. It is a book about fishing; but through it runs a vein of quaint and gentle meditation on many themes, and here and there are lovely little pictures of sky and brook and meadow. (2.) Pepys' *Diary* is a work that has made the writer immortal. It covers nine years of the reign of Charles II., and in its pages the gay and wicked society of the Restoration lives again. It is a book that, like Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, "draws away the curtain from the Past." Not the least interesting feature of Pepys' *Diary* is the unconscious revelation of his own character, a piquant mixture of shrewdness, vanity, worldly wisdom, and simplicity. (3.) Clarendon's *History of the Great Rebellion* is a royalist's history of the Civil War. Clarendon has been called "the great cavalier-prince of historical portrait-painters"; and it is for life-like portraits of his famous contemporaries that his work is most prized.

Suggestions for Reading.—*Pilgrim's Progress*, Part I.;—Macaulay's *Essay on Bunyan*.

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In this chapter we have considered:—

1. *The Religious Writers of the Seventeenth Century.*
2. *Bunyan's Life.*
3. *Pilgrim's Progress.*
4. *Other Famous Books of the Seventeenth Century.*



## CHAPTER VIII.

JOHN DRYDEN.

(1631-1700.)

“Without either creative imagination or any power of pathos, he is in argument, in satire, and in declamatory magnificence, the greatest of our poets.”—*G. L. Craik*.

“I admire Dryden’s talents and genius highly ; but his is not a poetical genius. The only qualities I can find in Dryden that are essentially poetical are a certain ardor and impetuosity of mind with an excellent ear. . . . There is not a single image from nature in the whole of his works.”—*William Wordsworth*.

“Behold, where Dryden’s less presumptuous car,  
Wide o’er the fields of glory bear  
Two coursers of ethereal race,  
With necks in thunder clothed, and long-resounding pace.  
Hark, his hands the lyre explore !  
Bright-eyed Fancy, hovering o’er,  
Scatters from her pictured urn  
Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.”—*Gray*.

“English prose is indebted to Dryden for having freed it from the cloister of pedantry. He, more than any other single writer, contributed, as well by precept as example, to give it suppleness of movement and the easier air of the modern world. His own style, juicy with proverbial phrases, has that familiar dignity, so hard to attain, perhaps unattainable except by one who, like Dryden, feels that his position is assured.”—*Lowell*.

**Life of Dryden.**—Milton was the last of the Elizabethan poets. In the eighteenth century we reach another circle of writers, far below the earlier group in power. Between these two epochs, with characteristics of the age before

him, and also of the age that came after, stands John Dryden.

Dryden was born and bred a Puritan. Little is known of his early life. Up to the age of twenty-nine he appears to have had no thought of becoming a professional author. He had written nothing but school-boy translations and odes, and an elegy on the death of Cromwell. He had influential friends among the Republicans, then in power, and looked forward confidently to a political rather than to a literary career. But, in 1660, the Puritans lost control of the government, Charles II. came back to the throne, and Dryden's hopes fell. His only means of support was his pen; and he was shrewd enough to see that taste to appreciate literary talent, and power to reward it, were both with the party of the royalists. — It cost him no great effort to abandon his Puritan sentiments, and publish an ode of fervent welcome to the returning king. To please Charles II. and his court became Dryden's literary ambition. He himself says: "I confess my chief endeavors are to delight the age in which I live. If the humour of this be for low comedy, small accidents, and raillery, I will force my genius to obey it." The frivolous society of the Restoration bent its energies to the business of amusement, and no other recreation was so popular as the theatre. He who could write the most acceptable plays, became accordingly the most successful literary man. Dryden worked with industry and tact, having no scruples against suiting his style and subject to the corrupt taste of the time. While he made writing for the stage a profession, he occasionally produced a non-dramatic poem. In 1667 he wrote a narrative in verse, entitled *Annus Mirabilis*, or *Year of Wonders*. It related the events of the year 1666, the terrible plague and fire of London, and the war with the Dutch. Its flattery of the worthless king advanced Dryden's fortunes. In 1670 he was appointed Poet Laureate and historian to the king.

The foremost theatrical company made a contract with him by which he was to furnish three plays a year. Even the rapid, careless pen of Dryden could not, however, keep up such speed as this. In thirty-two years he produced but twenty-eight plays. Dryden's social advancement was rapid. He associated with the favorites at Court; he enjoyed the patronage of the king; and the prestige of his honorable descent, his fine personal appearance, and his brilliant talent, won him an earl's daughter for a wife.

He was an admired member of fashionable society, and in literary circles was looked up to as an oracle. Social and literary successes, however, did not satisfy him. His active tastes led him into political controversy, and in 1681 he wrote the brilliant *Absalom and Achitophel*. Though written in poetical form, it is in reality a political pamphlet, in support of the king's party. *The Medal* was a pamphlet of the same character. In the following year, he turned upon his literary enemies in the satire called *Mac Flecknoe*. There was no purpose, in fact, for which Dryden did not appear willing to use his ready verse. He passed through several changes of religious belief, and at each stage he defended himself in an argumentative poem. He had been a Puritan, but became at the Restoration a member of the Church of England. In defense of this change of opinion, he wrote *Religio Laici*, an explanation of the faith of a layman. In 1686 he forsook the church that he had so powerfully defended, and entered the Roman Catholic communion. The sincerity of this conversion has often been called in question; for King James had then succeeded Charles II., and was using every effort to re-establish the Roman Catholic influence in England. Many things, however, tend to prove that Dryden was sincere: he kept his new creed, when the Protestant William and Mary came to the throne, although he suffered not a little

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for his faith; he carefully educated his children in the venerable Church of Rome; and he wrote his *Hind and Panther* in sympathy with her reverses.

The Revolution of 1688, by which William and Mary were placed upon the throne of England, deprived Dryden of his Laureateship. The Protestant Court did not smile upon the Catholic poet. But poverty, advancing age, failing health, and the malice of exultant foes, proved powerless to impair his energy; and his last years were the most illustrious of his literary career. He continued to write for the stage until 1694; but after that year he busied himself chiefly with translation. His poetical versions of Juvenal, Persius, and Virgil appeared in 1693; and in the last year of his life he wrote his *Fables*, a series of renderings from Chaucer and Boccaccio.

For twelve years Dryden had lived poor and neglected; yet when he died, in 1700, evidence of the high esteem in which he was held was promptly given. While his family was preparing to bury him in a style suited to humble circumstances, a large subscription was raised to give him the tribute of an imposing funeral. His body was conveyed in state to Westminster Abbey, and was interred between the tombs of Chaucer and Cowley.

**The Growth of Dryden.**—Critics have justly said that Dryden, more than any other poet, would gain appreciation from a chronological survey of his writings. In power of thought and expression, he was a man of steady growth. In his early years he wrote his poems and dramas to please a corrupt age; his best dramas, his thoughtful criticisms, his satires, translations, and odes—in short, all those works that show the higher qualities of his mind—were written in the dignified maturity of his manhood, or in his noble old age. This change in his writings reflected the change that went on in his character. He acquired

dignity and manliness, moral courage and modesty. During the last years of his life, though neglected by fashionable society, Dryden reigned supreme in literary circles. He held his court at Will's Coffee-house, and was surrounded by young writers, who were absorbing his precepts, and were preparing to hand them down to the next age. Pope, a lad of twelve, caught a peep at the great Mr. Dryden as he sat at Will's. Addison wrote his first boy-poem in honor of Dryden. Swift showed some of his own verses to the great man, and never forgave Dryden because he told the youth plainly, "Cousin Swift, you will never be a poet." Will's was long after the rallying-place of the wits. "If they had but once had the honor to dip a finger and thumb in Mr. Dryden's snuff-box, it was enough to inspire 'em to write Verse as fast as a tailor takes stitches." Dryden was a literary dictator like Ben Jonson before him, and like Samuel Johnson years after.

**Non-dramatic Poems.**—In Dryden, reason was much more active than imagination. He loved nothing so well as an argument. His thoughts were strong, vigorous, and sensible; but they were seldom poetic. The beauty that touched and delighted him was the beauty of a fine piece of reasoning, a brilliant epigram, a neat bit of characterization. The thought of his poems is weighty and valuable, but it is prose thought. Dryden's subjects condemn him as a poet. What right has poetry to meddle with political quarrels, with theological debates, or with literary squabbles? Poetry is for higher uses. The marvel is that what another man finds sufficiently difficult to express in prose, Dryden attempts in verse. Perhaps the most difficult species of writing known is abstract reasoning in poetical form; yet Dryden moves without strain or effort through his heroic couplets, as if they were his natural speech. His satire was keen, merciless, and brilliant. No one surpasses him in striking off a



telling sketch of an enemy. Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, had written a witty play called *The Rehearsal*, which ridiculed Dryden's dramas. Dryden had his revenge. In one of his satires he draws this portrait of Villiers :

“ In the first rank of these did Zimri stand,  
 A man so various that he seemed to be  
 Not one, but all mankind's epitome;  
 Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong,  
 Was everything by starts and nothing long;  
 But in the course of one revolving moon  
 Was chymist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon;  
 Blest madman, who could every hour employ  
 With something new to wish or to enjoy!  
 Railing and praising were his usual themes,  
 And both, to show his judgment, in extremes:  
 So over violent or over civil  
 That every man with him was God or Devil.  
 In squandering wealth was his peculiar art;  
 Nothing went unrewarded but desert.  
 Beggared by fools whom still he found too late,  
 He had his jest, and they had his estate.  
 He laughed himself from Court; then sought relief  
 By forming parties, but could ne'er be chief;  
 Thus wicked but in will, of means bereft,  
 He left not faction, but of that was left.”

Dryden had undoubtedly one gift of the poet—an ear for music. This gift he used to our delight in his odes. *Alexander's Feast* will not bear a close examination as poetry, but as a musical composition it is exquisite. Every year some poet wrote an ode for the festival of St. Cecilia, the patroness of music. Dryden composed one in 1687, and ten years later wrote his more famous *Alexander's Feast*. Dryden's versification, we may here add, was, more than any other feature of his writing, admired and imitated by the poets that followed him. As Pope declares,

“ Dryden taught to join  
 The varying verse, the full-resounding line,  
 The long majestic march, and energy divine.”

**Dryden's Plays.**—Nearly a hundred years had passed since the plays of the Elizabethan drama were written. A change had meanwhile taken place in public taste, and in what was written to please it.

“The stage but echoes back the public voice;  
The drama's laws, the drama's patrons give,  
For we that live to please, must please to live.”

These words of Dr. Johnson are never truer than when applied to the Drama of the Restoration. The aim of Shakespeare and his fellow-writers had been to portray the human nature common to high and low, rich and poor, to all lands and to all ages. The drama that followed the Restoration took its material, not from Nature, but from Society. It produced pompous tragedy; gay, witty, and affected comedy. A corrupt society found any play tame and insipid that was not highly spiced with immorality. These plays are repulsive to the purer modern taste. They are meeting the punishment that they deserve: few of them are either acted or read. To modern readers, Wycherley, Vanbrugh, Farquhar, Congreve, are hardly more than names. They were “of an age,” not, like Shakespeare, “for all time.” Dryden was one of the men who degraded his talents to please a corrupt taste. He was very popular, but it was not because of his fine delineation of character, his humor, or his pathos. His comedies were full of ingenious but coarse situations and indecent wit. His tragedies were filled with bombastic declamation. He was always able to catch the ear of the public with his graceful versification.

The shamelessness of the stage did not go unrebuked. A sturdy clergyman, Jeremy Collier, faced the scorn of play-goers, and presented himself as the champion of decency. He wrote a fiery and witty pamphlet entitled *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the En-*

*glish Stage*, in which he attacked Wycherley, Congreve, and Dryden. Dryden showed a manly and generous spirit in his acknowledgment of the justice of Collier's charges. In one of his prefaces he said :

“I shall say less of Mr. Collier, because in many things he has taxed me justly ; and I have pleaded guilty to all thoughts and expressions of mine which can be truly argued of obscenity, profaneness, or immorality, and retract them. If he be my enemy, let him triumph ; if he be my friend, as I have given him no personal occasion to be otherwise, he will be glad of my repentance.”

The manliness of Dryden is seen in the courage with which he several times changed his mind. He was, indeed, a man upright and respectable in his private life. “His indelicacy,” said Walter Scott, “was like the forced impudence of a bashful man.” In his later years, a closer study of the Shakespearean writers led Dryden to a juster view of the province of the drama. He returned to the use of blank verse, and developed considerable power in portraying passion and character. In the preface of *All for Love*, the poet thus acknowledges the source of his inspiration : “In my style I have professed to imitate the divine Shakespeare. . . . I hope I may affirm, and without vanity, that by imitating him I have excelled myself.”

**Dryden's Translations.**—(1.) Dryden's version of Virgil's *Æneid* is the most famous of his translations. An author and his translator should be congenial in taste and method ; but Dryden and Virgil were by no means kindred spirits. Virgil was delicate and graceful ; Dryden, big, careless, and powerful. But if he did not reproduce Virgil's spirit, he produced a poem which, though scholars may not approve it, has nevertheless been the most popular translation of Virgil. (P. 275.)

(2.) The same lack of sympathy between the two poets

made Dryden incapable of modernizing Chaucer. He turned several of Chaucer's stories into more modern English; but, though these versions were popular in Dryden's time, the nineteenth century prefers to read Chaucer in the original.

**Dryden's Prose Writings** are in the form of critical essays, prefaces, or dedications prefixed to his various works. (1.) He was an intelligent critic for the time at which he wrote; criticism being then in an undeveloped state. Many of Dryden's theories and judgments now appear commonplace or utterly wrong; but, when he wrote, he exerted a good influence in leading people to think about what they read. Whether we accept his opinions or not, what Dryden says always has point. (P. 279.)

(2.) Dryden's prose has the same vigor and ease that has been noticed in his poetry. It is, moreover, better English prose than we have found before, and carries English literature a step farther towards the excellence of modern prose. He brought his critical powers to bear upon his own expression, and had the good sense to see that an uninflected language like the English, which shows the relation of words by their place in the sentence, not by their form, requires a short, simple, straightforward sentence as the foundation of its style. As Dryden marks a transition in poetry, so in prose he marks the transition from the involved, ornate periods of Milton to the easy, familiar prose of Addison. The movement in poetry, with which he is connected, was bad; the movement in prose was good.

**Suggestions for Reading.**—*Annus Mirabilis*. Selections from *Absalom and Achitophel*, *Lines to Mistress Anne Killigrew*, *A Song for St. Cecilia's Day*, *Alexander's Feast*;—Lowell's *Essay on Dryden*;—Selections from Macaulay's *Essay on Dryden*.

**In this chapter we have considered:—**

- 1. Life of Dryden.*
- 2. The Growth of Dryden.*
- 3. Non-dramatic Poems.*
- 4. Plays.*
- 5. Translations.*
- 6. Prose Writings.*



## CHAPTER IX.

### ALEXANDER POPE.

(1688-1744.)

“That clever creature, that quintessence of soul, that drop of clear spirit in cotton wool.”—*Sainte-Beuve*.

“In Pope I cannot read a line,  
But with a sigh I wish it mine ;  
When he can in one couplet fix  
More sense than I can do in six,  
It gives me such a jealous fit,  
I cry, ‘Pox take him and his wit !’”—*Swift*.

“King Alexander had great merit as a writer, and his title to the kingdom of wit was better founded than his enemies have pretended.”—*Henry Fielding*.

“If Pope must yield to other poets in point of fertility of fancy, yet in point of propriety, closeness, and elegance of diction he can yield to none.”—*Joseph Warton*.

“Pope’s rhymes too often supply the defect of his reasons.”—*Richard Whately*.

“As truly as Shakespeare is the poet of man as God made him, dealing with great passions and innate motives, so truly is Pope the poet of society, the delineator of manners, the exposé of those motives which may be called acquired, whose spring is in institutions and habits of purely worldly origin.”—*J. R. Lowell*.

**The Augustan Age** was the name given to the epoch of literature immediately following the time of Dryden. It is also called the Age of Queen Anne, though its writers did some of their best work during the reign of George I.

There was little that was new, exciting, or adventurous in the age of Anne. The Elizabethan age was creative,

and produced new ideas ; the age of Anne contented itself with an admirable restatement of old ideas. Pope's *Essay on Criticism* is an example.

“ The poet's eye in a fine frenzy rolling,  
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,”

described the Elizabethan poet ; but the cool and critical Augustan poet thought “ a fine frenzy ” quite unnecessary, and liable to lead to countless blunders and absurdities. Dr. Johnson said that Shakespeare had not six lines together without a fault. When Pope was a boy, “ the knowing Walsh ” told him that the English had had several great poets, but never any one great poet who was correct. Walsh struck the key-note of Pope's ambition, and of the poetry of his age.

Writers not only looked closely to the correctness of their poetry—they carried their critical instinct into every department of life. Criticism in politics took the form of virulent pamphlets ; literary criticism produced such spiteful satires as Pope's *Dunciad*, while society sparkled with satirical epigrams. The atmosphere was withering to true poetry and to noble inspiration.

We find prose matter and poetical form continually combined. Addison, when he wished to write a critical *Account of the Principal English Poets*, wrote it in rhyming verses of ten syllables—the heroic couplet that was a feature of the age. Pope laid down the principles of rhetoric in the same metre. We saw in Dryden the beginning of this kind of poetry. He was the master to whom the following age looked up. His sound sense, clearness of statement, and harmonious verse, were admired and imitated. His followers aspired, however, to greater neatness and elegance, and succeeded in giving poetry a higher polish than it had ever before attained. They were satisfied with the result. They never doubted

that the great period of English literature had at last arrived, and without hesitation they named it the *Augustan Age*.

The influences of this age were not altogether bad. Writing came to be looked on as a fine art, which a man could not pursue without care and training. War was waged on "the mob of gentlemen that write with ease,"—as Pope called them. A young enthusiast was not to rush into print with his first shapeless productions: he was to learn to wait patiently; to let his poem lie still and ripen; to allow his standards of excellence to mature; to submit to criticism of judicious friends; to keep in view always his responsibility as an artist. Such were the teachings of the *Augustan Age*. Clearness became the first duty of the writer, and condensation the second. Pope summed up in himself the excellences and the faults of his time; he was most strongly influenced by his age, and was in turn the strongest influence upon other writers.

**Life of Pope.**—Pope was born in London, and was of Roman Catholic parentage. His father was a well-to-do merchant, who had acquired sufficient property to retire from business and to enjoy the leisure of his country home near Windsor. Pope was a sickly child, so deformed that he called his life "that long disease." Unluckily, he could not be sent to school, and missed the rough-and-tumble association with noisy, healthy boys. If he had been a boy among boys, he would have been a man among men. By the time he was twelve, he had become a literary young gentleman of talent and leisure. The books he liked best were the poems of Waller, Spenser, and Dryden. (1.) Before this, he had himself begun to write. He said years after :

"As yet a child, and all unknown to fame,  
I lisped in numbers, for the numbers came."

His *Ode to Solitude*, written at the age of twelve, is remarkably thoughtful. The verses of the precocious boy were handed about among literary men, who had their share in spoiling him. His parents' most absorbing occupation was to watch the unfolding of his wonderful mind. His father assigned him subjects for his poems, and was his first reader and critic. These early poems are of little interest in themselves. It was not till the *Essay on Criticism* appeared in 1711, that Pope deserved any fame. The poem was written when he was twenty-one, and was published two years later. It marked the beginning of a most prosperous and successful literary career. Whatever he wrote was received with interest and applause. One of his early poems was *The Epistle of Eloisa to Abelard*; another was the famous *Rape of the Lock*. Pope's literary career has been divided into three periods: that of his early poems, of which several have been mentioned; second, the ten years of his middle life, devoted to translation; and third, his later years, in which he wrote his moral and satirical poems.

(2.) The translation of Homer was the most serious piece of work that Pope engaged in. It was a bold commercial undertaking, and proved a remarkable success. Subscriptions poured in when the work was but just begun, showing the confidence of the public in the translator's ability. Pope was the first author in the history of English literature who made a fortune with his pen. His profit from the translation of Homer was at least £9,000. It enabled him to purchase his villa at Twickenham, and, quoting his own words, to

“———maintain a poet's dignity and ease,  
And see what friends, and read what books I please.”

(3.) The third period of his literary life was passed at Twickenham, a pretty suburb of London, lying a few miles

up the river, on the banks of the Thames. Pope had an eager interest in the newly-developed art of landscape gardening, and produced wonders, his friends tell us, with his little five acres of land. Says Horace Walpole, "Pope had twisted and twirled and rhymed and harmonized this, till it appeared two or three sweet little lawns, opening and opening beyond one another, and the whole surrounded with impenetrable woods." Pope's grotto at Twickenham was famous. It was fitted up with many little mirrors, that flashed the light in every direction, and reflected the coral, crystals, petrifications, and marbles that his friends sent to him.

At Twickenham Pope wrote the *Dunciad*, the *Essay on Man*, and his epistles. In spite of his feeble health, he lived to the age of fifty-six. When a young man in London, Sir Joshua Reynolds, the great portrait painter, saw Pope, and said of him :

"He was about four feet six inches high, very humpbacked and deformed. He wore a black coat, and, according to the fashion of that time, had on a little sword. He had a large and very fine eye, and a long, handsome nose; his mouth had those peculiar marks which are always found in the mouths of crooked persons, and the muscles which run across the cheek were so strongly marked that they seemed like small cords."

Pope was so little that a high chair was needed for him at the table, so weak and sickly that he could not stand unless tied up in bandages, so sensitive to the cold that he was wrapped in flannels and furs, and had his feet encased in three pairs of stockings. His deformity gave him the nickname of "The Interrogation Point."

In dress and manners Pope was fastidious and elegant. He was a polished man of the world.

**Pope's Friends.**—He had many friends and many enemies, for he was both loving and quarrelsome. He was



most lovable in his relation to his fond old mother, to whom he was the best of sons. Until her death, he was still her child, her "deare." She petted and praised him to the last, and fed his vanity with her loving flattery. He was as sensitive to praise as to ridicule, and this doting mother, always at his ear, had no small influence upon his character. The applause of a friend like Swift was not good for Pope. "When you think of the world, give it one more lash at my request," Dean Swift would say. He made an intimate friend of the brilliant, dashing, and unprincipled St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke. It was to Bolingbroke that Pope addressed the four epistles forming the *Essay on Man*. Pope's friendship and quarrel with Addison are famous. There is much gossip about it in the biographies, but we hardly need to know more than the characters of the two men to account for their unfriendliness. Addison was a man of dignified self-respect, and Pope a man of irritable self-esteem; there is always a clash when these two characters meet. Another quarrel was with the famous letter-writer, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. She was a witty, brilliant woman, and quite a match for Pope. "The Wicked Wasp of Twickenham" was her name for him.

**Character.**—Pope was an invalid, and more or less of a genius, and he had all the faults that belong to both characters. The invalid and the man of genius are full of contradictions; and Pope, with all his unmanly irritability and vanity, had, nevertheless, his moments of deep devotional feeling and genuine moral elevation. There is no reason to doubt the piety of his hymns, or to reject as insincere many a noble thought in his poems. It is also to be remembered that whatever Pope attained in life, he won by pure energy and intellect. Let us admire the courage and the will that against such odds achieved such results.

**Essay on Criticism.**—This is perhaps the most remarkable poem ever written by a youth of twenty-one. We find in Pope not a trace of youthful folly. He is from the first discreet, sententious, and self-contained. He never claimed for the *Essay* originality of thought. The poem is described by his own verse :

“What oft was thought, but ne’er so well expressed.”

Many lines of the *Essay on Criticism* have become famous. The expression is often so neat, vigorous, and sparkling, that it becomes fixed in the memory, and even embedded in our common speech.

“Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.”

“A little learning is a dangerous thing.”

“To err is human, to forgive divine.”

Such verses strike the ear and linger in the memory, partly because of their agreeable sound. Pope in his *Essay* lays down the principle,

“The sound must seem an echo to the sense.”

The *Essay on Criticism* is not, however, faultless. Pope’s exquisiteness of finish has been overpraised. His thought rambles, he falls into dull, prosy sentences, and often uses a faulty rhyme.

**The Rape of the Lock.**—Lord Petre, a young gallant at the Court of Queen Anne, carried his admiration for the beautiful Miss Arabella Fermor so far as to cut off slyly one of her lovely ringlets. The young lady’s family represented this as a serious act of impertinence. It was suggested to Mr. Pope that a trifle from his pen might laugh the matter off, and restore good feeling. The poem was the delight of fashionable circles. Addison called it “a

delicious little thing," and critics ever since have agreed in thinking it the best mock-heroic poem in the language. The fun of the thing consists in treating an absurd little incident in solemn epic style. Pope was never more original, never showed more fancy, than when he invented the guardian sylphs, "the thousand bright inhabitants of air," that attend on Belinda. The *Rape of the Lock* is a trifle, but perfect in its way.

**Translation of Homer.**—The criticism of Bentley, when he read Pope's translation of the *Iliad*, leaves nothing more to be said: "It is a pretty poem, Mr. Pope, but you must not call it Homer." That Pope should undertake a translation of Homer without a knowledge of Greek, shows the ignorance of the age for which he wrote. The work was greatly admired, and had a strong influence on the poetry that followed. It set the fashion of a poetical diction remote from that of every-day life. When Homer mentions an *ass*, Pope cannot bring himself to write the word: he transforms it into "the slow beast with heavy strength endued." It became the peculiarity of Pope's imitators never to call a thing by its simple name. A boot became "the shining leather that encased the limb"; a caterpillar, "the crawling scourge that smites the leafy plain." After all, Pope's Homer is very pleasant reading. It is smooth and flowing, spirited and rapid. This book has been from Pope's own day "the delight of generous boys." It was the first poetry that Walter Scott read, and was the delight of Byron's boyhood.

**The Dunciad.**—Pope's brilliant success, his popularity, the tinge of vanity and malignity in his disposition, and above all, the supercilious tone in which he speaks of other authors, raised around him a swarm of enemies, animated alike by envy and revenge. Determining, therefore, to

inflict upon these scribblers a punishment that they would remember, he composed the *Dunciad*, the fiercest, most sweeping, and most powerful satire of English literature. *The Dunciad* is remarkable for its wit and its workmanship, but genius was never put to a more unworthy use.

The satires and epistles of Pope show his intellect at its best. *The Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* deserves a careful reading.

**Essay on Man.**—Whatever his master, Dryden, had done before him, that Pope in turn attempted. Dryden had modernized Chaucer, and Pope had tried to do the same; both undertook laborious translations; and both wrote literary satires. As Dryden had won his greatest fame by his skill in reasoning in verse, Pope made a bold attempt to follow him in his *Essay on Man*. The poem is one that is remembered and valued in fragments rather than as a complete work. It contains lofty and brilliant passages, and many a line so condensed in thought, and so neat and apt in expression, that it has come down to us as a proverb. Pope, in fact, has furnished more familiar quotations than any other author except Shakespeare. The *Essay on Man* supplies a large number :—

“Heaven from all creatures hides the book of fate.”

“Hope springs eternal in the human breast:  
Man never is, but always to be blest.”

“Honor and shame from no condition rise;  
Act well your part, there all the honor lies.”

“Know then thyself, presume not God to scan,  
The proper study of mankind is Man.”

Over all Pope's poetry is the charm of the smoothest versification. His heroic couplets have become monotonous to our ear, but to the taste of his own age they were novel and delightful. (P. 289.)

**The Critics of Pope** are too much inclined to tell us what he is not, rather than what he is. Here, for instance, is a typical criticism :—

“His poetry had not the naturalness and simplicity of Chaucer’s, the universality of Shakespeare’s, the majestic and solemn earnestness of Milton’s, or even the freedom and breadth of Dryden’s. It never touched the national heart like the poetry of Cowper and Burns.”

It would be more profitable to sum up the positive merits of Pope. His poetry is a keen intellectual pleasure to many of the best minds, because of his wit and brilliant good sense, his vivid pictures of the world in which he lived, his skill in expression, and his matchless versification.

**Suggestions for Reading.**—An *Essay on Criticism*,—*The Rape of the Lock*,—*Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*;—Ward’s *English Poets*,—*Essay on Pope*;—Lowell’s *Essay on Pope*;—Thackeray’s *English Humorists*,—*Lecture on Pope*.

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**In this chapter we have considered:—**

1. *The Augustan Age.*
2. *The Life of Pope.*
3. *His Friends.*
4. *His Character.*
5. *The Essay on Criticism.*
6. *The Rape of the Lock.*
7. *Translation of Homer.*
8. *The Dunciad.*
9. *The Essay on Man.*
10. *The Critics of Pope.*



## CHAPTER X.

JOSEPH ADDISON.

(1672-1719.)

“Give days and nights, sir, to the study of Addison, if you mean to be a good writer, or, what is more worth, an honest man.”—*Samuel Johnson*.

“The great satirist who alone knew how to use ridicule without abusing it, who without inflicting a wound effected a great social reform, and who reconciled wit and virtue after a long and disastrous separation, during which wit had been led astray by profligacy, and virtue by fanaticism.”—*T. B. Macaulay*.

“[Steele in the *Tatler*] paints as a social humorist the whole age of Queen Anne—the political and literary disputes, the fine gentlemen and ladies, the characters of men, the humours of society, the new book, the new play ; we live in the very streets and drawing-rooms of old London.”—*Stopford Brooke*.

**Introduction.**—Modern English prose began to develop under the influence of Dryden, and continued, in the eighteenth century, to increase in grace and power. Before the year 1700, if a man wished to write what should be imperishable, he used Latin prose or composed a poem. It may be said that Addison did for English prose what Chaucer did for the English language : he gave it a literary position ; he won for it the respect of writers and readers. With its development, we may trace the growth of the novel, the history, the essay, and the biography, forms of writing of which little is heard before the Age of Queen Anne.

**Early Life of Addison.**—It was Joseph Addison who first made English prose simple, easy, natural, and yet dignified.

His father, Lancelot Addison, was a clergyman of some reputation for learning. He sent his son to the Charter-house, a famous London school ; and there the lad and his playfellow, "Dick" Steele, became fast friends. Addison afterwards entered Magdalen College, Oxford, where he was distinguished for his scholarship, and especially for his skill in writing Latin verses.

Among his earliest English poems, was *An Account of the Principal English Poets*. This has no value save as a relic of the literary taste of that age. It was a generation that pitied Chaucer and Spenser, and omitted Shakespeare altogether from the roll of the great poets. Addison's *Address to Dryden* was poor enough poetry, but it served to win Dryden's friendship. The old poet was translating Virgil, and Addison, proud to give him his modest help, wrote the arguments for the books of the *Æneid*. Dryden was then old and poor, and there is something pleasant in the fact that the old poet was cheered and supported by the fresh young admiration of Addison. Some complimentary verses to King William, aided by the influence of Lord Halifax, gained him the reward of £300 a year. He at once departed for the Continent, and traveled in France and Italy, till the death of King William put an end to his pension and summoned him home. On his return to London, we hear of him as "indifferently lodged" over a little shop, up three pairs of stairs. But he was a man of temper like that of Hamlet's friend Horatio :—

"A man that fortune's buffets and rewards  
Hath ta'en with equal thanks ; and blest are those  
Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled  
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger  
To sound what stop she please."

Happily, at this crisis, the Duke of Marlborough won the Battle of Blenheim, and Anne's minister, Godolphin,

determined that it should be celebrated in a poem. Halifax was consulted, and named his friend Addison as a literary man of promise. Godolphin's messenger accordingly climbed the three flights of dark stairs to the poet's garret, and gave the order for the poem. Addison's *Campaign* was soon the talk of the town. "A large prize poem that won an enormous prize," Thackeray calls it. Its author was soon made Under-Secretary of State, and afterwards Chief Secretary for Ireland. The reception of *The Campaign* paved the way for further literary successes. Addison brought out his *Travels in Italy*; he helped Steele write a play called *The Drummer*; he himself wrote the opera of *Rosamond*. Italian opera had lately been introduced into England, to the disgust of people of sober tastes, like Addison. He determined to show London that sensible English words were capable of being set to music for the stage. His opera was, however, a failure: its music was poor, and it had no dramatic merit.

**The Tatler.**—Up to this point, Addison's literary career had been respectable, but not distinguished. While he was in Ireland, an enterprise was undertaken in England which was destined to reveal his powers. We might never have discovered him to be a charming moralist and humorist if his friend Steele had not established *The Tatler*. Addison and Steele had been school-boys together, then fellow-students at Oxford, and now were warm friends and literary co-workers. What more natural than that Steele should call in his friend's aid in a new undertaking?

It happened that Steele, having done the government good service with his pen, was rewarded with the office of Gazetteer; that is, he was given the exclusive privilege of publishing official news. This suggested to him a very original project. He determined to found a new species of periodical, which should contain the news of the day and

a series of light and agreeable essays upon topics of general interest, likely to improve the taste, the manners, and the morals of society. It should be remarked that this was a period when literary taste was at its lowest ebb among the middle and fashionable classes of England. The amusements, when not merely frivolous, were either immoral or brutal. Gambling, even among women, was prevalent. The sports of men were marked with cruelty and drunkenness. In such a state of society intellectual pleasures and acquirements were regarded either with wonder or with contempt. The fops and fine ladies actually prided themselves on their ignorance of spelling, and any allusion to books was scouted as pedantry. Such was the disease which Steele desired to cure.

“The general purpose of this paper,” said *The Tatler*, “is to expose the false arts of life, to pull off the disguises of cunning vanity and affectation, and to recommend a general simplicity in our dress, our discourse, and our behavior.” When we honor Addison as a reformer, we must remember that it was Steele who made him one. No man better appreciated their relations than the generous, large-hearted Steele himself. “I fared,” he said, “like a distressed prince, who calls in a powerful neighbor to his aid—I was undone by my auxiliary. When I had once called him in, I could not subsist without dependence on him.” We never detect in Steele a shade of envy of his more gifted friend; his loyalty to Addison was almost romantic in its devotion.

The name *Tatler*, Steele explained, was “invented in honor of the fair sex,” for whose entertainment especially the paper was intended. It was a small, penny sheet, appearing three times a week, each number containing a short essay, a few bits of news, and some advertisements. The popularity of the new journal was great; no tea-table, no coffee-house, was without it; and the authors, writing

with ease, pleasantry, and knowledge of life,—writing as men of the world, rather than as literary recluses, soon gained the attention of the people whom they addressed. *The Tatler* was published for nearly two years—from April 12, 1709, till January 2, 1711. By that time Steele had lost his position as Gazetteer.

**The Spectator.**—A few weeks after *The Tatler* ceased, *The Spectator* began its career. It appeared six times a week, and reached a circulation that was extraordinary for that day. Its aim was the same as that of *The Tatler*. Said *The Spectator* :—

“It was said of Socrates that he brought Philosophy down from heaven to inhabit among men ; and I shall be ambitious to have it said of me that I have brought Philosophy out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables and in coffee-houses.”

Addison's ambition appears to have been gratified, for in the ninety-second *Spectator* is a letter signed Leonora, which reads :—

“Mr. Spectator,—Your paper is a part of my tea-equipage ; and my servant knows my humor so well that, calling for my breakfast this morning (it being past my usual hour), she answered, the *Spectator* was not yet come in, but the tea-kettle boiled, and she expected it every moment.”

*The Spectator* was published from March, 1711, to December, 1712, through six hundred and thirty-five numbers. Its form was popular, and had many successors, among them *The Guardian*, *The Freeholder*, Johnson's *Rambler* and *Idler*, and Goldsmith's *Bee* and *Citizen of the World*.

**Cato.**—An event of little importance to us, but of great importance to Addison, was the production of his tragedy



of *Cato*, in 1713. The play was a wonderful success. Night after night an applauding audience crowded the theatre, Whig and Tory finding delight in applying the political sentiments of the piece to the English politics of their own day ; but after a few weeks the enthusiasm cooled, and the play was no longer heard of upon the stage. Readers find its story uninteresting, and its characters lifeless. *Cato*, like the tragedies of the French, was written with strict regard for the classical unities. Voltaire said, “ Addison was the first Englishman who wrote a reasonable tragedy.” The play has stirring lines and admirable pieces of declamation. Cato’s soliloquy upon immortality is a well known and admired passage.

**Addison’s Social and Political Career.**—Addison was not merely a man of letters. There were many men of his time,—Swift, Steele, Congreve, Gay, Prior,—who led both a political and a literary life. Addison himself held several lucrative and honorable offices, and was a member of the House of Commons. He was a faithful but not a distinguished public official. His unconquerable timidity prevented him from speaking with effect. The presence of more than two or three friends made him shrink into himself, though we have the word of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu that “ Addison was the best company in the world.” He was a man of many friends and but one enemy,—Pope, whose famous portrait of Atticus was unquestionably meant for Addison. Pope sneered at him because he loved the little court of admirers that surrounded him at the coffee-house :—

“ Were there One whose fires  
True Genius kindles, and fair Fame inspires;  
Blest with each talent and each art to please,  
And born to write, converse, and live with ease:  
Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,  
Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne,

View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,  
And hate for arts that caus'd himself to rise;  
Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,  
And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer;  
Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,  
Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike;  
Alike reserv'd to blame, or to commend,  
A tim'rous foe, and a suspicious friend;  
Dreading ev'n fools, by flatterers besieg'd,  
And so obliging, that he ne'er oblig'd;  
Like Cato, give his little senate laws,  
And sit attentive to his own applause;  
While Wits and Templars ev'ry sentence raise,  
And wonder with a foolish face of praise;  
Who but must laugh, if such a man there be?  
Who would not weep, if Atticus were he?"

In 1716, Addison's worldly fortunes were further advanced by his marriage with the Countess Dowager of Warwick. The year after his marriage, he reached the highest point of his political career; he was made Secretary of State, and in this eminent position, exhibited the liberality, modesty, and genuine public spirit that had characterized his whole life.

Addison died at the early age of forty-seven.

**Addison's Poetry** was very popular when it was written, but the judgment of later times has given it a place far below his prose. It is cold, correct, and monotonous,—the poetry of a calm, sensible man, who understood and applied the rules of his art. (1.) *The Campaign* is a stiff and prosy poem. Addison deserves credit, however, for his conception of his hero, Marlborough. He abandons the absurd custom of former poets, who paint a military hero as slaughtering whole squadrons with his single arm. He places the glory of a great general on its true basis—the power of conceiving and carrying out profound designs, the possession of calmness and foresight in the hour of

danger. The praises of Marlborough were none too lofty for the popular demand. The town went wild over one passage, in which the hero was compared to an angel guiding a whirlwind :—

“ So when an angel by divine command,  
With rising tempests shakes a guilty land  
(Such as of late o’er pale Britannia passed),  
Calm and serene he drives the furious blast;  
And, pleased the Almighty’s orders to perform,  
Rides on the whirlwind and directs the storm.”

(2.) Addison’s best poetry is contained in his hymns. Religious feeling seems to have been the most fervent that he knew ; more inspiration found its way into his hymns than into *Cato* or *The Campaign*. Many of them are familiar. Addison wrote the solemn hymn beginning with these lines :—

“ When all thy mercies, O my God!  
My rising soul surveys,  
Transported with the view, I’m lost  
In wonder, love, and praise.”

**Addison’s Prose.**—As Pope’s poetry shows the best results of the literary influences of his day, so Addison’s shows the worst. In poetry he was stilted and artificial ; while in prose he was entirely natural and at ease. By readers of the nineteenth century, Addison is valued solely as a writer of short essays for *The Tatler*, *Spectator*, and *Guardian*. (1.) For *The Tatler* he furnished one-sixth, for *The Spectator* more than one-half, and for *The Guardian* one-third of the matter. His papers are signed by one of the four letters, C. L. I. O., either the letters of the name of Clio, or the initials of Chelsea, London, Islington, and the Office, the places where the essays were written. (2.) The variety of his subjects is remarkable. No theme

is too lofty, none too trivial, to furnish matter for amusing or profitable reflection. From patches, fans, and head-dresses to the most serious questions of morality and religion, every subject is lightly but wisely treated. Among these papers are critical essays, like the series upon *Paradise Lost*. Milton had been neglected by the eighteenth century, and Addison's appreciative criticism did much to establish the modern regard for his poetry. Another series of papers introduces the inimitable Sir Roger de Coverley and his circle of dependents.

(3.) The special mission of *The Spectator* was accomplished in its short lay-sermons on the follies and vices of the times. "Addison made morality fashionable," says Taine. He reconciled virtue and good-breeding. He taught that piety is not priggishness; that elegance of manner does not, of necessity, harden the heart. Addison is a teacher of manners as well as of morals. "Kindness," he says, "is so necessary to our comfort in this world, that man has been forced to invent a kind of artificial humanity, which is what we express by the word good-breeding."

(4.) Pope was the typical wit of Queen Anne's age, and Addison the humorist. There is no flash in Addison's fun, and there is no sting. He possessed a sense of the ridiculous that would have made him a terror to society, had it been guided by a less tender heart. Nothing in his character is more admirable than the restraint that he placed upon his humor. "The gentle satirist," Thackeray calls him,—“the gentle satirist, who hit no unfair blow; the kind judge, who castigated only in smiling.”

(5.) In Addison's writing certain qualities of style reach their perfection: simplicity, ease, naturalness, and elegance. His English is colloquial and idiomatic, without loss of grace and dignity. A recent writer, Robert Louis Stevenson, speaks of "an elegant homeliness that rings of the true Queen Anne," "a strain of graceful gossip, sing-

ing like the fireside kettle." Such was the charm of Addison. His writing is always calm, serene, and leisurely, never hurried, energetic, or impassioned. It represents the perfection of good-breeding in writing. Said Dr. Johnson, "Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison." (P. 290.)

Thackeray wrote delightfully of Addison. In *The English Humorists* he says:—

"Addison wrote his papers as gayly as if he were going out for a holiday. When Steele's *Tatler* first began its prattle, Addison, then in Ireland, caught at his friend's notion, poured in paper after paper, and contributed the stores of his mind, the sweet fruits of his reading, the delightful gleanings of his daily observation, with a wonderful profusion. . . . He was six-and-thirty years old; full and ripe. He had not worked crop after crop from his brain, cutting and sowing and cutting again, like other luckless cultivators of letters. He had not done much as yet; a few Latin poems—graceful prolusions; a polite book of travels; a dissertation on medals, not very deep; four acts of a tragedy, a great classical exercise; and *The Campaign*, a large prize poem that won an enormous prize. But with his friend's discovery of *The Tatler*, Addison's calling was found, and the most delightful talker in the world began to speak. . . .

"When this man looks from the world whose weaknesses he describes so benevolently, up to the Heaven which shines over us all, I can hardly fancy a human face lighted up with a more serene rapture; a human intellect thrilling with a purer love and adoration than Joseph Addison's. Listen to him: from your childhood you have known the verses; but who can hear their sacred music without love and awe?—

" 'Soon as the evening shades prevail,  
The moon takes up the wondrous tale,  
And nightly to the listening earth  
Repeats the story of her birth;  
And all the stars that round her burn,  
And all the planets in their turn,  
Confirm the tidings as they roll,  
And spread the truth from pole to pole.  
What though in solemn silence all  
Move round this dark terrestrial ball;  
What though no real voice nor sound,  
Among their radiant orbs be found;



In reason's ear they all rejoice,  
And utter forth a glorious voice  
Forever singing as they shine,  
The hand that made us is divine.'

"It seems to me those verses shine like the stars. They shine out of a great, deep calm. When he turns to Heaven, a Sabbath comes over that man's mind ; and his face lights up from it with a glory of thanks and prayer. His sense of religion stirs through his whole being."

**Suggestions for Reading.**—*The Spectator*, Nos. 1, 2, 10, 13, 26, 37, 102, 106, 112, 122, 130, 159, 275, 281, 329, 335, 517 ;—*Eighteenth Century Essays*, edited by Austin Dobson ;—Macaulay's *Essay on Addison* ;—Thackeray's *English Humorists*, *Lecture on Addison*.

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**In this chapter we have considered:—**

1. *The Prose of the Augustan Age.*
2. *Early Life of Addison.*
3. *The Tatler.*
4. *The Spectator.*
5. *Cato.*
6. *Addison's Social and Political Career.*
7. *His Poetry.*
8. *His Prose.*

## CHAPTER XI.

JONATHAN SWIFT.

(1667-1745.)

"No English is more robust than Swift's, no wit more scathing, no life in private and public more sad and proud, no death more pitiable."—*Stopford Brooke*.

"He moves laughter, but never joins in it. He appears in his works such as he appears in society. All the company are convulsed with merriment, while the Dean, the author of all the mirth, preserves an invincible gravity, and even sourness of aspect, and gives utterance to the most eccentric and ludicrous fancies, with the air of a man reading the commination service."—*T. B. Macaulay*.

"Swift was in person tall, strong and well made, of a dark complexion, but with blue eyes, black and bushy eyebrows, nose somewhat aquiline, and features which well expressed the stern, haughty, and dauntless turn of his mind. He was never known to laugh, and his smiles are happily characterized by the well-known lines of Shakespeare,—indeed, the whole description of Cassius might be applied to Swift:—

'He reads much :

He is a great observer, and he looks

Quite through the deeds of men : . . . .

Seldom he smiles, and smiles in such a sort

As if he mocked himself, and scorned his spirit

That could be mov'd to smile at anything.'"

— *Walter Scott*.

"Perhaps I may allow the dean  
Had too much satire in his vein,  
And seemed determined not to starve it,  
Because no age could more deserve it.  
Yet malice never was his aim;  
He lashed the vice, but spared the name;  
No individual could resent,  
Where thousands equally were meant.

\* \* \* \* \*

True genuine dullness moved his pity,  
 Unless it offered to be witty.  
 Those who their ignorance confess'd,  
 He ne'er offended with a jest;  
 But laugh'd to hear an idiot quote  
 A verse from Horace learn'd by rote.

\* \* \* \* \*

He gave the little wealth he had  
 To build a house for fools and mad;  
 And show'd by one satiric touch  
 No nation wanted it so much."

—Swift's Verses *On the Death of Dr. Swift.*

**Life.**—Of the three men who make the Age of Queen Anne illustrious, Jonathan Swift was the most original and powerful. This remarkable man was born in Dublin; but his parents were English. He lived to be an old man, for he was born in 1667, and died in 1745. His mother was early left a widow in extreme poverty, and Swift in his childhood was dependent on the charity of relatives. Till he was twenty-one, his life was passed entirely in Ireland. His uncle sent him to school at Kilkenny, and afterwards to Trinity College, Dublin. Swift was, therefore, offered the best education that Ireland afforded. He did not accept it very graciously, or do his family much credit. Logic and metaphysics were the pride of the university; but Swift detested them both. He was granted his degree "by special favor," as is recorded on the college books to this day. His next step in life enabled him to carry on his education in the lawless fashion that he liked. In 1688 he entered the household of Sir William Temple, a distant relative, in whose service he remained as secretary for six years. His social position, midway between that of a member of the family and that of a servant, was galling to his proud spirit. Sir William Temple probably did not treat the raw Irish lad with much distinction; but we must remember that Swift had as yet done nothing to

convince the world of his abilities. For such a young man, with education and without money, the natural, almost necessary, career at that time lay within the Church. On the death of Temple, in 1699, Swift left Moor Park, and took charge of a little country parish not far from Dublin, where he preached to a congregation of fifteen persons. At a week-day service, when only he and his parish clerk were present, Swift is said to have begun the service, "Dearly beloved Roger, the Scripture moveth you and me."

Swift paid frequent visits to London, where he was fast making friends with the men best worth knowing. He was beginning to be recognized as an author, for he had published *The Tale of a Tub*, a satire written several years before at Moor Park. In the family of Sir William Temple, moreover, he had acquired a taste for politics. He began life as a Whig, and wrote the first of his powerful pamphlets in support of that party. But there were many reasons why he had not at heart much sympathy with the Whigs, and it is not strange that, in 1710, he went over to the Tories. He became, then, the fiercest antagonist of the Whigs, writing against them pamphlet after pamphlet, the most bitterly partisan, the most savage and powerful in our literature. His *Public Spirit of the Whigs*, his *Conduct of the Allies*, and his *Reflections on the Barrier Treaty* are among the most famous. The Tories had received Swift with open arms, and had done their best to obtain for him the English bishopric that was the great object of his ambition. But some one had whispered to Queen Anne that no man who had written *The Tale of a Tub* was fit to be a bishop. Swift was obliged to content himself with the Deanery of St. Patrick's, Dublin. This was the clerical office that he held from 1713 till his death, in 1745.

The Tories went out of power, and the Whigs came in

again upon the death of Queen Anne. Swift retired into exile, for he had seen the end of his ambitions. The rest of his life he spent in Ireland, with but two more visits to England. For the next ten or twelve years he performed faithfully his duties as dean of the cathedral. There is little more to record of him. The Whigs were secure, and feared little from their ancient enemy. They were made, however, to feel once more his power.

The condition of Ireland was just then deplorable ; the manufacturing industries and the commerce of the country were paralyzed ; the agricultural classes were reduced to the lowest depth of degradation. Swift boldly proclaimed that Ireland's misery was due to "subjection to a government not intentionally cruel, but absolutely selfish, which acted on the principle that the happiness of Ireland should not weigh against the convenience of England." The special act of selfishness that roused Swift in 1724 was briefly this : Copper half-pence to a large amount were to be coined by an Englishman in Ireland, and forced into circulation. Copper to the value of £60,000 was to be made into half-pence amounting to £100,000, clearly leaving to some one a large profit. In the famous *Drapier Letters*, published in a Dublin newspaper, Swift endeavored to persuade the people to refuse these dishonest half-pence, and to refrain, moreover, from using any English manufactures. These letters were signed *M. B.*, *Drapier*, and were ostensibly written by a plain, hard-working Irish tradesman. For some time no one suspected the author. Excitement was so great, that £300 was offered for his discovery. When the letters had done their work, and the obnoxious coinage had been stopped, the secret of *M. B.*, *Drapier*, became known. Swift's defense of the rights of the Irish people made him from that moment the idol of that warm-hearted race. His influence was unbounded. The Lord Lieutenant wrote home, "When people ask me



how I govern Ireland, I reply, 'So as to please Dr. Swift.'"

*Gulliver's Travels* was published two years later, and was received with delight and admiration. Swift was too sad a man by that time to care much about the fortunes of his book. The life of his beloved Stella was drawing to a close; many of his old friends were already dead; while he himself was tortured with forebodings of insanity. Said Dr. Young:—

"I remember, as I and others were taking with Swift an evening walk, about a mile out of Dublin, he stopped short; we passed on; but, perceiving he did not follow us, I went back, and found him fixed as a statue, and earnestly gazing upwards at a noble tree, which, in its upper branches, was much withered and decayed. Pointing at it, he said, 'I shall be like that tree; I shall die at the top.'"

His fears were cruelly realized. In 1741 he passed into a state of idiocy that lasted, without interruption, till his death, in 1745. He is buried in his own Cathedral of St. Patrick; and over his grave is inscribed that terrible epitaph composed by himself, in which he speaks of resting "where fierce indignation can no longer torture his heart," "*ubi sæva indignatio ulterius cor lacerare nequit.*" But the most impressive monument of this sad life is the hospital for idiots and incurable madmen, built and endowed in accordance with the directions of Swift's will.

**Stella and Vanessa.**—An account of Swift's career would be incomplete without some mention of the two women whose lives were so closely connected with his. A bright, pretty little girl, named Esther Johnson, had grown up in Sir William Temple's household, to whom the moody young scholar Swift had become "guide, philosopher, and friend." He superintended her education. When the

Temple household was broken up, and Swift returned to his native country, Stella, having few friends, went also to live in Ireland, where she could invest her little fortune to better advantage, and where she could see occasionally the best friend that now remained to her. She was accompanied by an elderly lady, and Swift never saw her except in the presence of a third person. Whether he wished to marry Stella, or did marry her, will never be known with certainty. It was believed by many that they were privately married in the garden of the deanery in 1716. The *Journal to Stella* is a remarkable relic of their friendship. This was a sort of prolonged letter written to her during his absence in London,—the most familiar, undignified, fond, and foolish letter that ever saw the light.

When Swift was in London, at the height of his power, he had made the acquaintance of Hester Vanhomrigh, a bright young creature, in whose mind he appears again to have taken a school-masterly interest. Vanessa, as he called her, fell in love with him, and, on the death of her father, removed to Ireland. There Swift continued his visits without explaining to either of the ladies the nature of his relations to the other. Vanessa, however, learned of the existence of Stella, wrote her a melodramatic letter, and received an astonished answer. When Swift next visited her, Vanessa presented him with Stella's letter. He threw it to the ground, trampled on it, and strode out of the house, never to enter it again. Vanessa's heart was broken; she died not long after. Whatever Swift's relation to Stella, we at least know that, from the time they were pupil and teacher at Moor Park, she was, of all the world, the human being whom he loved best.

**Character.**—The worst side of Swift's character is probably known to the world. It was a part of the morbidness

of his disposition that he liked to trick people into believing ill of him, and then hated them because he succeeded. His thoughts and words were most unkind ; his deeds were often most generous. He hated humanity in general, but many an individual could have told of his good deeds. His was "a hand never weary of giving gifts to the poor, and blows to the powerful." "Who would have wished this man for a friend?" asks Thackeray. Yet so good an authority as Addison declares that Swift was "the most agreeable companion, the truest friend, and the greatest genius of his age." Swift was a born ruler : no one, man or woman, that came near him, but felt the irresistible force of his personal influence.

**Swift's Early Writings.**—(1.) *The Tale of a Tub* is a title that Swift explains in his preface : "It is a tub thrown to the wits to stay their on-coming rush upon the weak sides of Religion and Government, even as sailors throw the barrel to the whale to save the ship." *The Tale of a Tub* is a satirical history of the Church. It is equal to *Gulliver's Travels* in depth of meaning, fierce satire, and formidable wit ; and it is superior to *Gulliver* in vigor and rapidity. "What a genius I had when I wrote that book!" Swift said in his old age. *The Tale of a Tub* relates the adventures of three brothers, Peter, Jack, and Martin. Peter (the Roman Catholic Church), Martin (the Lutherans), and Jack (the Calvinists) received coats from their dying father. The coats were to last them as long as they lived, provided they kept them clean. But as fashions changed, the coats changed with them. Embroidery, fringes, and tinsel conceal the simple garments bequeathed by the father. Peter hides the will, and assumes lordly dignities. Martin and Jack steal copies of the will, and leave Peter's house. Martin tries to remove some of the trappings from his coat, and to leave some ; but Jack,

in his earnestness, rips off all the embroidery, and tears away much of the coat.

Roman Catholics or Presbyterians might well be scandalized, but Swift's own sect had not so much reason to complain. His effort was to get the laugh on the side of Martin, or the Reformed Church, for Swift was a thorough-going and consistent Church of England man.

(2.) *The Battle of the Books* is not a work of importance. A foolish discussion had been going on as to the respective merits of Ancient and Modern Literature. Sir William Temple had been engaged in the contest, and his young secretary joined his side.

**Swift's Poetry**, as poetry, deserves no serious consideration. If ever man viewed life in its most prosaic aspect, that man was Swift. It is a poet's office to create illusions, but it was Swift's special gift to destroy them. He wrote rhymes and verses, it is true, like every other man of letters who lived then. The Dean had, indeed, a more than common knack at jingling. *Cadenus and Vanessa*, and *Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift*, are characteristic.

**Gulliver's Travels.**—The greatest of Swift's works is the *Voyages of Gulliver*, a vast satire upon humanity. The plan of the book is as follows: A plain, honest ship-surgeon describes, in a simple, straightforward fashion, the strange scenes and extraordinary adventures through which he passes. The contrast between the absurdity of the incidents and the gravity with which they are related, illustrates the peculiar humor of Swift. Solemn truthfulness was his favorite trick of style, as it was Defoe's. So completely did *Gulliver's Travels* impose upon some readers, that a certain Irish bishop declared "the book was full of improbable lies, and, for his part, he hardly believed a word of it."

The work consists of four parts, or voyages. In the first, Gulliver visits the country of Lilliput, whose inhabitants are about six inches in stature, and where all the houses, trees, ships, and dumb animals are in exact proportion to the miniature human beings. The invention displayed in the droll and surprising incidents is unbounded ; while the strange scenes and adventures are recorded with an appearance of sober honesty that is inimitable. The second voyage is to Brobdingnag, a country of enormous giants, sixty feet in height ; and here Gulliver plays the same part that the pigmy Lilliputians had played to him. As in the first voyage, the contemptible and ludicrous side of human things is presented by showing how trifling they would appear in almost microscopic proportions, so in Brobdingnag we are made to perceive how petty and ridiculous our politics, our wars, and our ambitions would appear to the perceptions of a gigantic race. The third part carries Gulliver to a series of strange and fantastic countries. The first is Laputa, a flying island, inhabited by philosophers and astronomers ; whence he passes to the Academy of Lagado ; and thence to Glubbdubdrib and Luggnagg. In this part the author introduces the terrific description of the Struldbrugs, wretches who are cursed with bodily immortality without intellects or affections. Gulliver's last voyage is to the country of the Houyhnhnms, a region where horses are the reasoning beings ; and men, under the name of Yahoos, are degraded to the rank of noxious, filthy, and unreasoning brutes.

Swift said that he wrote the book "to vex the world rather than to divert it" ; but Lilliput and Brobdingnag are certainly more diverting than vexatious. The satire beyond this point, however, loses its playfulness, and grows more and more bitter at every step, till, in the Yahoos, it reaches a pitch of insane ferocity. "Great wits to madness nearly are allied," and when we read the last book of *Gul-*



*liver*, we are not astonished that its author did, indeed, go mad. (P. 296.)

**Swift's Style.**—A great rhetorician has called Swift the master of the “plain style.” Nothing could be a greater contrast to the urbane manner of Addison, which was, in the old phrase, a “polite style.” Swift took no pains to please; he was brutally vigorous. He uses the plainest Anglo-Saxon, seldom employs a metaphor, almost never makes use of a quotation. He is, in fact, one of the most original of English writers. He says of himself that Dr. Swift

“To steal a hint was never known,  
But what he writ was all his own.”

**Suggestions for Readings.**—*Gulliver's Travels*, Parts I. and II.;—Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*,—*Life of Swift*;—Thackeray's *English Humorists*,—*Lecture on Swift*.

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**In this chapter we have considered:—**

1. *Life of Swift.*
2. *Stella and Vanessa.*
3. *Character of Swift.*
4. *His Early Writings.*
5. *His Poetry.*
6. *Gulliver's Travels.*
7. *Swift's Style.*

## CHAPTER XII.

DANIEL DEFOE.

(1661-1731.)

“To have pleased all the boys in Europe for near a hundred and fifty years is a remarkable feat.”—*Leslie Stephen*.

“Was there ever anything written by mere man, that the reader wished longer, except *Robinson Crusoe*, *Don Quixote*, and *Pilgrim's Progress*?”—*Dr. Johnson*.

“*Robinson Crusoe* is delightful to all ranks and classes. It is capital kitchen reading, and equally worthy, from its deep interest, to find a place in the libraries of the wealthiest and the most learned.”—*Charles Lamb*.

**Prose Fiction in the Eighteenth Century.**—English prose acquired excellence and importance in the eighteenth century, and with this development of prose, there grew up several new departments of writing. Of these the periodical and the novel have been most conspicuous in the last hundred years. The rise of the periodical has been traced; the growth of the novel must be briefly considered. Up to this point, English literature had had no prose fiction in the modern sense of the term. It is idle to call Sidney's *Arcadia* a novel, or in a history of English literature to consider the Latin philosophical romances of Bacon and More. In the age of Elizabeth, the taste for fiction was gratified by the drama. A few novels were written, but they were soon made over into plays. Lodge's *Rosalynde*, for example, became Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, and Greene's *Pandosto* was the foundation of *The Winter's Tale*.

The use of prose narrative in the delineation of passions,

characters, and incidents of real life was first developed by writers in the eighteenth century, among whom the names of Defoe, Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne are the most brilliant.

(1.) Samuel Richardson was a successful London printer, who, up to the age of fifty, had no thought of becoming an author. He had been famous from his youth as a fluent and elegant letter-writer; and a London firm, wishing to publish a "complete letter-writer," applied to Richardson as the person best fitted to prepare the work. After he had accepted the commission, it occurred to him that he might make the letters tell a connected story. The result was his first novel, *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*. Richardson suddenly found himself famous. Fashionable ladies formed an admiring circle about him; grave moralists like Dr. Johnson praised his truth to nature, and popular preachers applauded the high tone of his morality. *Clarissa Harlowe*, published in 1748, and *Sir Charles Grandison*, in 1753, increased the fame of Richardson. Of his three novels, *Pamela* dealt with low life, *Sir Charles Grandison* with high life, while *Clarissa Harlowe* portrayed the middle class of society. This last novel described the people and the life that Richardson himself knew best, and it was his greatest success. Richardson's novels are, to our taste, high-flown and tedious, and few modern readers have patience to follow *Clarissa Harlowe* or *Pamela* through eight volumes of adventures. Richardson had, however, a minute knowledge of the human heart and great skill in displaying its workings. His books are pre-eminently novels of sentiment. It has always been easy to laugh at him, and no one in his own time found him so supremely ridiculous as did the witty and rollicking Harry Fielding.

(2.) Fielding's first novel, *Joseph Andrews*, was intended as a caricature of *Pamela*. This book contains the famous

character of Parson Adams, who is as learned and simple, as wise and foolish, as Don Quixote himself. *Amelia* and *Tom Jones* are the best of Fielding's novels. They are the first complete pictures of English life in fiction. What they relate is a part of the real history of the English people: how they ate and drank and slept; how they lived in country or in city; how they walked and rode and traveled, talked and laughed and amused themselves. In the construction of his plots, Fielding was masterly. The story of *Tom Jones* is called by critics one of the few perfect plots in literature. Fielding was a profound student of human nature, and his pages are filled with wise and humorous delineations of character. His digressions and chats with the reader are perhaps inartistic, but they are one of the delightful characteristics of Fielding, as they are of his great successor, Thackeray. Fielding was a humorist of the first order. Unfortunately, he had a coarse nature, and little delicacy of moral sense. "Humor must diffuse itself through the whole," was one of his maxims in novel-writing, but his humor is often so low and vulgar, and his morality so contemptible as to stir the resentment of a high-minded reader.

(3.) Smollett was a writer in whom are found the same faults of coarseness and low moral tone, but in whom the finest qualities of Fielding are absent. He was, however, a racy and vigorous writer, who filled his books with noisy fun and lively scenes and adventures. His best-known novels are *Roderick Random* and *Humphrey Clinker*. The characters for which his novels are most valued are his English sailors.

(4.) Laurence Sterne was a whimsical humorist, who wrote two famous books—*Tristram Shandy* and *A Sentimental Journey*. *Tristram Shandy* is rather a study of character than a connected story. The book is as fantastic, crotchety, and humorous as Sterne himself. Uncle

Toby is his masterpiece as a creation of character. Fine humor and delicate pathos are to be found in Sterne's writings ; but too often his humor degenerates into buffoonery, and his pathos into sentimentality.

(5.) The greatest of this group of novelists was Fielding, but the writer who yields most pleasure and instruction to the young student is Daniel Defoe.

**Defoe's Pamphlets.**—In order of time, Defoe comes before the writers that have been mentioned, for he was born in 1661, and his most famous work, *Robinson Crusoe*, appeared in 1719. Defoe may, therefore, be called the founder of modern fiction. He was the son of a London butcher named Foe ; but, not liking the family name, he thought to give it a more aristocratic form by prefixing the syllable *De*. Defoe was an able and public-spirited citizen, active and fearless in every good cause. He was a man of whom we say that he was "ahead of his age." As early as 1698, he was advocating the founding of insurance companies, savings banks for the poor, and colleges for the higher education of women. He was so filled with the desire for various reforms, that he was impelled to write in order to bring his views before the public. People then read pamphlets, and were influenced by them, as they are now by the editorials of their newspapers. Defoe had the gift of the journalist, and in our own day might have found his way to novel-writing as Dickens did—through being an admirable reporter and a ready newspaper writer. In religious matters, he was also in advance of his time, and urged a freedom of thought and conscience then unknown. His radical Protestantism frequently brought him into trouble. In spite of fines and imprisonment, he boldly published pamphlet after pamphlet, second only to Swift's in their vigor and irony. One of these pamphlets—*The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*—had a singular



history. Defoe wished to show the English Churchmen the absurdity of their intolerance, and so, pretending to be on their side, he wrote a paper gravely proposing to rid the land of Dissenters by hanging their ministers and banishing the people. His irony succeeded better than he had intended. People were completely imposed upon by the apparent seriousness of his argument, and Defoe was sentenced to stand in the pillory, because he had dared to propose such a monstrous piece of injustice. He loved nothing so well as a practical joke, but he must have felt in this instance that the joke was turned upon himself. He wrote an *Ode to the Pillory*, describing it as

“A hieroglyphic state-machine,  
Condemned to punish fancy in.”

Defoe made himself felt in his own time as a vigorous defender of religious and political freedom; but he won his place in literature as the writer of *Robinson Crusoe*.

**Robinson Crusoe.**—The first part of *Robinson Crusoe* appeared in 1719, and its success was instantaneous. From that day to this it has been the most fascinating boys' book in the world's literature. Like *Pilgrim's Progress*, and like *Gulliver's Travels*, it has not only been read by children, and by the humble and ignorant, but has also delighted the thoughtful critic. A man alone on a desert island supplies a subject that rouses the sympathy and breathless attention of every man, woman, and child. To this unique and thrilling situation Defoe brought a very peculiar power of imagination. “Let us think,” says Morley, “how a man of weak imagination would have solved the problem: given one man and an island to make a story. In Defoe's story, all is life and action.” He had not imagination in the high sense in which the great poets possessed the gift; it was rather in Defoe a marvelous

power of invention, by which he could spin out of his mind an intricate web of details. He could close his eyes on his own world, and Robinson Crusoe "making pots and pans, catching goats, and sowing corn," would be as clear to his sight as were the visions of *The Faerie Queene* or *Paradise Lost* that unrolled before Spenser or Milton. In this lower order of imaginative writing, Defoe has never been surpassed. He not only conceived the situation with the utmost distinctness and precision, but he was able also to set it before the reader as undoubted fact. "In other words," says Leslie Stephen, "he had the most marvelous power ever known of giving verisimilitude to his fictions; or, in other words again, he had the most amazing talent on record for telling lies." Defoe was at the mature age of fifty-eight when he wrote this famous book, but he went about it with the freshness and zest of his first youth. The unfailing vivacity of *Robinson Crusoe* has made it the delight of boys. The humblest people have found it easy reading, for Defoe, like Swift, wrote in the "plain style." *Robinson Crusoe* is a famous example of homely, substantial Saxon English. (P. 303.)

**Defoe's Other Works of Fiction.**—*The Memoirs of a Cavalier* deserves special mention. The work professes to have been written by one who had taken part in the great Civil War; and so successfully was the pretense carried out, that it deceived even the great Chatham into citing the volume as an authentic narrative. In *A Journal of the Great Plague in London*, he shows the same marvelous faculty for representing fiction as truth. The imaginary annalist, a respectable London shopkeeper, describes the terrible sights and incidents of that time with a vividness that is appalling. *The Adventures of Colonel Jack*, *Moll Flanders*, *Roxana*, and *Captain Singleton*, show the same power of feigning reality. His *True Relation of the Ap-*

*parition of one Mrs. Veal* was a bold experiment upon the credulity of the public. He wrote the story at the request of a bookseller, in order to aid the sale of a dull book, *Drelincourt on Death*. Mrs. Veal returns from the dead and advises her friend to read this book, if she desires reliable information about the other world. Defoe's purpose was accomplished, for the whole edition of *Drelincourt on Death* soon disappeared from the bookseller's shelves.

Defoe's writings are not studies of character; they have not elaborate plot; they do not deal with the passion of love. The fiction of Defoe is the novel in a state of formation. Fielding took us a step farther towards Dickens, Thackeray, and George Eliot. It was not until the nineteenth century that the novel was to gain its high and honorable place in literature.

**Suggestions for Reading.**—*Robinson Crusoe*;—Leslie Stephen's *Hours in a Library*,—*Essay on Defoe*.

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**In this chapter we have considered:—**

1. *Prose Fiction in the Eighteenth Century.*
2. *Defoe's Pamphlets.*
3. *Robinson Crusoe.*
4. *Defoe's Other Works of Fiction.*

## CHAPTER XIII.

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

(1709-1784.)

"A mass of genuine manhood."—*Thomas Carlyle.*

"Johnson, to be sure, has a rough manner; but no man alive has a better heart. He has nothing of the bear but the skin."—*Oliver Goldsmith.*

"Rabelais and all other wits are nothing compared to him. You may be diverted by them; but Johnson gives you a forcible hug, and squeezes laughter out of you, whether you will or no."—*David Garrick.*

"If it be asked who first, in England, at this period, breasted the waves and stemmed the tide of infidelity,—who, enlisting wit and eloquence, together with argument and learning on the side of revealed religion, first turned the literary current in its favor, and mainly prepared the reaction which succeeded,—that praise seems most justly to belong to Dr. Samuel Johnson."—*Lord Mahon: History of England.*

"He had a loud voice, and a slow, deliberate utterance, which, no doubt, gave some additional weight to the sterling metal of his conversation. Lord Pembroke said once to me at Wilton, with a happy pleasantry, and some truth, that 'Dr. Johnson's sayings would not appear so extraordinary were it not for his *bow-wow way.*' But I admit the truth of this only on some occasions. . . . His person was large, robust, I may say approaching to the gigantic, and grown unwieldy from corpulency. His countenance was naturally of the cast of an ancient statue, but somewhat disfigured by the scars of that evil which, it was formerly imagined, the royal touch could cure. He was now in his sixty-fourth year, and was becoming a little dull of hearing. His sight had always been somewhat weak; yet, so much does mind govern and even supply the deficiency of organs, that his perceptions were uncommonly quick and accurate. His head, and sometimes also his body, shook with a kind of motion like the effect

of a palsy: he appeared to be frequently disturbed by cramps, or convulsive contractions, of the nature of that distemper called St. Vitus's dance. \*He wore a full suit of plain brown clothes, with twisted hair-buttons of the same color, a large, bushy, grayish wig, a plain shirt, black worsted stockings, and silver buckles. Upon his tour, when journeying, he wore boots, and a very wide brown cloth great-coat, with pockets which might have almost held the two volumes of his folio Dictionary; and he carried in his hand a large English oak stick. Let me not be censured for mentioning such minute particulars: everything relative to so great a man is worth observing."—*Boswell*.

**Early Life of Johnson.**—The central figure in the literary history of the eighteenth century is Samuel Johnson. He was the son of a poor bookseller in Lichfield. When a child, he "browsed" among books, as Charles Lamb did in his boyhood; and, having a marvelous memory, became known in the town as a prodigy. He went to a Dame School, and was afterward placed under the charge of a certain formidable Mr. Hunter. Johnson became one of the famous Latin scholars of his time, and, when asked how he acquired such learning, he declared, with approval, that it was "whipped into" him. In 1728, as poor as Chaucer's Clerk of Oxenford, he entered Pembroke College, Oxford. In spite of the hardships that he suffered there, he loved his college faithfully. His poverty forced him to leave the university before taking his degree; but, years after, when he came to be "the great lexicographer," Oxford was proud to confer upon him a doctor's degree. Johnson left the university at the age of twenty-two. His father had died; he had no money, no influential friends, no plans, no prospects. He had nothing to begin life with but intellect. His own career illustrated sadly the truth of his own famous verse:—

"Slow rises worth by poverty depressed."

His life was a hand-to-hand struggle with poverty till he



was fifty-three. In his first effort to be independent, he set up "an academy for young gentlemen" in Lichfield, which failed outright. He had, meanwhile, married a widow old enough to be his mother. Garrick describes Mrs. Johnson as very fat, with painted cheeks, and fantastic dress and manners. She appears, however, to have had the good sense to recognize the worth of the man she had married. She introduced her extraordinary young husband to her daughter: "My dear, this is the most sensible man I ever met." He loved her with romantic devotion, and when she died clung to her memory with a loyalty that was touching.

The failure of his school drove Johnson to London to seek his fortune. He became a bookseller's hack, a literary drudge, such as Pope had attacked in his *Dunciad*. He had no sentiment about a literary career. "No man but a blockhead," he said, "ever wrote except for money." Poor Johnson needed money in those days. "Yours without a dinner,"—"Yours *impransus*,"—he signs himself in a note to his employer. He and his friend Savage, it is said, would walk the street all night when they could not pay for a lodging. Such experiences do not breed fine manners; and a man who "roughs it" as Johnson did, is himself rough at last.

He wrote for various publications, and oftenest for the *Gentleman's Magazine*. None of his work attracted much attention until, in 1738, he composed his satire called *London*. It was published anonymously, but people began at once to ask for the author. The great Mr. Pope, happily for the new poem, inquired out the writer, and when told that it was "some obscure person," said, "He will soon be disinterred." *London* is an imitation of Juvenal's satire upon Rome, and contains much that is true of any great city in any age. Johnson came to think more kindly of London as he grew older; there was no music so sweet to

his ear as the rumble and roar of his beloved city. "He who is tired of London," he used to say, "is tired of life."

**Johnson's Dictionary.**—From 1747 to 1755 Johnson was engaged in the preparation of his famous *Dictionary of the English Language*. This was the most gigantic piece of "hack-work" ever undertaken by one man alone. He had expected to finish it in three years, but seven had passed before it was ready for the printer. In the dictionary itself he defines a lexicographer as "a harmless drudge." Johnson's work may be said, however, to have taken a place in literature. To produce a dictionary that is actually readable, whose definitions are witty and wise, and convey information in a remarkably condensed and convenient form, was no small feat. The dictionary was, moreover, a collection of choice quotations from English literature, brought forward to illustrate the use of words. Its chief fault lay in Johnson's ignorance of German and other languages kindred to the English. This made him a poor authority upon the derivation of words. As no such work had before existed, Johnson's Dictionary supplied a need that had been long felt. Its success was immense, and "the great lexicographer" was applauded far and wide.

**Other Literary Tasks.**—(1.) While the dictionary was in progress, Johnson had tried his fortune with a play, and had persuaded his friend Garrick to bring it out at Drury Lane Theatre. The tragedy of *Irene* ran nine nights, but has never since been heard of on the stage. Nor has it had much more success with readers. Leslie Stephen says that it "can be read only by men in whom a sense of duty has been abnormally developed."

(2.) While at work on his dictionary, Johnson had turned aside to write another satire, on his favorite theme,

*The Vanity of Human Wishes.* (3.) At this time, too, he founded, and carried on alone, two periodical papers in the form that Addison and Steele had rendered so popular. These were the *Rambler* and the *Idler*; the *Rambler* was published from 1750 until 1752, and the *Idler* from 1758 until 1760. The ease, grace, pleasantry, and variety that gave such charm to the *Spectator* were quite beyond the reach of Johnson. His papers are strong, sober, sensible, and heavy. The brilliant French writer Taine continually points out that the English love to be preached to, and that they worship their moralists. Johnson's *Ramblers* and *Idlers* gave him a vast moral influence. People did not apparently receive them very eagerly; but they at least knew that it was their duty to read them, and valued the author accordingly.

(4.) Johnson's assured literary position did not, however, release him from poverty. His aged mother's death, in 1759, found him without money to pay the expenses of her funeral. To raise a small sum, he spent the nights of one week in composing his once famous moral tale, *Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia*. The manners and scenery of the tale are absurdly different from those of an Oriental country, and the story is but a slender thread to hold together a series of dialogues and reflections. *Rasselas* merely contains Dr. Johnson's opinions on a great variety of subjects, and especially his views of human happiness. It is still "the vanity of human wishes" that is his theme.

**A New Era in Johnson's Life.**—There came a turning-point in Dr. Johnson's life, when, in 1762, George III. granted him a pension of £300. This bounty of the king placed him above want, released him from literary drudgery, and gave him leisure to enjoy society. We now become acquainted with Johnson the talker. In fact, conversation was the business of the last twenty years of his

life, and he had time for little else. The necessity for work being removed, he let his natural indolence have its way, talked much and wrote little.

**Boswell's Life of Johnson.**—A singular fortune befell Dr. Johnson in his acquaintance with a young Scotchman, James Boswell, Esq. At the age of fifty-three, just as he had entered on his new life of ease and leisure, he fell in with this ardent, enthusiastic young admirer. "Who is this Scotch cur at Johnson's heels?" some one asked. "He is not a cur," said Goldsmith; "he is only a burr. Tom Davies flung him at Johnson in sport, and he has the faculty of sticking." From the beginning of their acquaintance, Boswell made it his habit, immediately on leaving Johnson, to write out the conversation that had passed. He naïvely apologizes in the biography for the imperfect reports that he gives at first. He says that he was "so wrapt in admiration of Johnson's powers," that he could not remember what he said! He tells us that it was not till he was "strongly impregnated with the Johnsonian ether that he was able to carry in his memory and commit to paper the exuberant variety of his wisdom and wit." The result of this odd friendship was the best biography of English literature. Boswell himself had the good sense to predict its success: "I venture to say, that he will be seen in this work more completely than any man who has ever yet lived."

Boswell shows us not one man only, but a whole society. He has given not merely the most lively and vivid description of the person, manners, and conversation of Johnson, but also the most admirable picture of the society in which he was the central figure. Among the meetings most famous in that age of clubs were those of the society founded by Johnson, together with his friends, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Goldsmith, Burke, Garrick, Bishop Percy, and others.

Boswell shows us Johnson among these companions, in the full tide of conversation. Johnson at the Club was Johnson supreme. "A tavern-chair," he once said, was "the throne of human felicity." He was "a tremendous companion," his friends declared.

Boswell himself is not the least entertaining character of the biography. He reveals himself with perfect candor, as a vain, frivolous, bustling gossip. Yet, however we may smile at the follies of his character, we must acknowledge Boswell to have been a man of rare gifts. He had the dramatic power that is the highest gift of the writer. His report of a conversation is worthy of study. Boswell himself disappears; his characters speak for themselves. We see them and hear them as we see and hear no other group of men of the Past. It is done with a few quick strokes of the pen such as only a gifted man could command. "That loose-flowing, careless-looking work of his, is as a picture by one of Nature's own Artists," says Carlyle. It is safe to predict that Boswell's *Life of Johnson* will be read long after Johnson's own writings are covered with dust.

**Johnson's Later Years.**—Among the many friends of Johnson's later life were the Thrales. Mr. Thrale was a rich brewer, a member of the House of Commons, and his sprightly wife was famous for her talents and for the intellectual society that she gathered around her. She was still more famous for her friendship with Dr. Johnson. There were many women that honored and admired him,—women like Hannah More and Fanny Burney, while the Doctor himself was by no means indifferent to "the endearing elegance of female friendship." Under the hospitable roof of the Thrales he enjoyed all that friendship, respect, and wealth could give. This acquaintance lasted sixteen years, and added much to his comfort and happiness.



*The Lives of the Poets*, his last and most important work, was published in 1781. A new edition of the English poets was to be issued, with an authoritative biographical sketch of each writer. Since Dr. Johnson was looked upon as the final authority in all literary matters, he was engaged to write these sketches. In the nineteenth century a marked change has taken place in literary taste, so that many of Johnson's opinions now appear narrow and prejudiced. His criticism of Milton, for example, is unsympathetic and unjust. The gentle poet Cowper, when he read *The Life of Milton*, said, "I could thrash his old jacket till I made the pension jingle in his pocket." Johnson's admiration was given to the poets of another class,—Cowley, Waller, Dryden, and Pope. Our opinions may often clash with his, yet *The Lives of the Poets* is to this day a work of high value. It abounds in vigorous common sense, in shrewd judgments of character, and in happy, original turns of expression. Johnson's style was here at its best, and his mind at the height of its activity. (P. 309.)

On the 13th of December, 1784, this great man died, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

**Character of Dr. Johnson.**—"As for Johnson," says Carlyle, "I have always considered him to be, by nature, one of the great English souls." He was an heroic struggler with misfortune. "Invulnerable patience,"—to use one of his own stout phrases,—was the key to his character. When has there lived a man so resolute, so independent, so invincible? He had, first of all, to get the better of a most unfortunate temperament. He was haunted by melancholia that in many men would have destroyed mind and character. His piety toward God, and his love for his fellow-men, kept him sane. "He was of a most humane and benevolent heart," says Boswell. In his poor home he

supported one blind old woman, one broken-down quack doctor, and two or three other destitute and forlorn creatures. All the *bear* vanished from Johnson in the presence of the unfortunate or unhappy. No heart answered with more tenderness or compassion to those that needed pity. No heart was more unerringly right and noble, whatever may have been the errors of his judgment. Johnson's intellect, indeed, shows a blending of prejudice and liberality, of bigotry and candor, that would have baffled a less skillful biographer than Boswell. Through all the contradictions of his character, Johnson was sincere. The excess of his sincerity made his manners sometimes brutal; but in its right exercise it made him a man of perfect truth and courage. Among frivolous men, he was serious; among scoffers, he was reverent; among insincere men, he was sincere; among selfish men, he was generous.

**Johnson's Style** has received the barbarous name of "Johnsonese." It has not the grace and ease of Addison, or the plainness and vigor of Swift. Johnson said himself that he used "too big words and too many of them." A style could hardly be charged with worse faults. Sonorous Latin derivatives and carefully elaborated sentences were used to clothe the plainest thoughts. Whether describing a scene in a tavern, or enlarging upon the grandest of moral themes, he indulges in the same display of language. Goldsmith once boldly declared to his face, "If you were to write a fable about little fishes, Doctor, you would make the little fishes talk like whales." Taine thus describes Johnson's style:

"In fact, his phraseology rolls away in solemn periods, in which every substantive marches ceremoniously, accompanied by its epithet; pompous words peal like an organ; every proposition is set forth balanced by a proposition of equal length; thought is developed with the compassed regularity and official splendor of a procession. . . .

An oratorical age would recognize him as a master, and attribute to him in eloquence the primacy which it attributed to Pope in verse."

**Suggestions for Reading.**—*Lives of the Poets*, edited by Matthew Arnold;—The Lives of *Addison* and *Pope*; Preface by Matthew Arnold;—Macaulay's *Essay on Dr. Johnson*;—Johnson (*English Men of Letters*);—Selections from Boswell's *Life of Johnson*;—Carlyle's *Essay on Boswell's Life of Johnson*.

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**In this chapter we have considered:—**

1. *The Early Life of Johnson.*
2. *His Dictionary.*
3. *Other Literary Tasks.*
4. *A New Era in Johnson's Life.*
5. *Boswell's Life of Johnson.*
6. *Johnson's Later Years.*
7. *Character of Johnson.*
8. *His Literary Style.*

## CHAPTER XIV.

### EDMUND BURKE.

(1730-1797.)

"No man of sense could meet Burke by accident under a gateway, to avoid a shower, without being convinced that he was the first man in England."—*Dr. Johnson*.

"I admire his eloquence; I approve his politics; I adore his chivalry."—*Gibbon*.

"The manner in which Burke brought his higher powers of intellect to work on statements of fact, and on tables of figures, was peculiar to himself. In every part of those huge bales of Indian information which repelled almost all other readers, his mind, at once philosophical and poetical, found something to instruct or to delight. His reason analyzed and digested those vast and shapeless masses; his imagination animated and colored them. Out of darkness, and dulness, and confusion, he formed a multitude of ingenious theories and vivid pictures."—*Macaulay*.

**Early Life of Burke.**—Edmund Burke, the most eminent political writer of the English literature, was born in Dublin, in 1729. Like Swift and Goldsmith, of Irish birth, he, like them, felt England to be his home, and Ireland a place of exile. "The absenteeism of her men of genius," says Froude, "was a worse wrong to Ireland than the absenteeism of her landlords. If Edmund Burke had remained in the country where Providence had placed him, he might have changed the current of its history." Burke was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, where, at the same time, Oliver Goldsmith was a student. From Dublin, Burke went to London, to enter upon his legal studies. The law he called "one of the first and noblest of human

sciences ; a science which does more to quicken and invigorate the understanding than all the other kinds of learning put together." In spite of this reverence for his profession, Burke did not persevere as a lawyer, but, to his father's disappointment and indignation, undertook to support himself by literary work. He emerged from obscurity at the age of twenty-six, as the author of a production that was intended as a huge practical joke. This was *The Vindication of Natural Society*, an ironical imitation of the style and sentiments of the brilliant and skeptical Lord Bolingbroke, the friend of Pope. In pursuing Bolingbroke's course of reasoning, he reached the conclusion that, as wickedness has prevailed under every form of government, society itself is evil, and therefore, that only the savage state is conducive to virtue and happiness. The work was published anonymously ; but so perfect was it as an imitation of Bolingbroke, that the most eminent critics of the day, among them Samuel Johnson, did not detect its intense and delicate irony, and pronounced it a genuine posthumous work of the earlier philosopher and statesman.

A few months afterward Burke published *An Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful*. He was by this time a regular contributor to the magazines, and was becoming known as an authority on politics. In 1765 he was elected to Parliament. "Now, we who know Burke," said Dr. Johnson, "know that he will be one of the first men in the country."

**Burke and America.**—During the agitated periods of the American and the French Revolution, he was one of the ablest and most eloquent debaters in the House of Commons. He followed closely the progress of affairs in America. None of his writings show him more wise, just, and tolerant than the noble speeches on *American Taxation*



and on *Conciliation with America*. (P. 321.) In a calm, lucid, and practical manner he sets forth the course that England should take with the American colonies. The speech on *Conciliation* is an eloquent protest against the war with America, that in March, 1775, seemed every day more threatening. Burke reminds his hearers that they are attacking the liberties of Englishmen when they impose an unjust tax on the colonies ; that John Hampden, refusing to pay ship money, had a cause no more just than that of the Boston men who threw the tea overboard. Said Burke :—

“The temper and character which prevail in our colonies, are, I am afraid, unalterable by any human art. We cannot, I fear, falsify the pedigree of this fierce people, and persuade them that they are not sprung from a nation in whose veins the blood of freedom circulates. The language in which they would hear you tell them this tale would detect the imposition ; your speech would betray you. An Englishman is the unfittest person on earth to argue another Englishman into slavery.”

**His Impeachment of Warren Hastings.**—The culminating point of Burke’s career was the part he took in the trial of Warren Hastings for his misgovernment of India. In that majestic and solemn scene, Burke was the chief actor. His final address began on the 28th of May, and lasted for nine days. India and her wrongs was his subject. It fired his imagination, and roused all the poet in him. The ruthless indignities to which a venerable land had been subjected, outraged his sense of justice, and kindled in him a furious zeal against the offenders. The effect on the audience was overpowering. Women fainted ; breath failed men as they listened to the condemnation of this terrible judge. Warren Hastings was, in the end, acquitted, but the English policy in India has undergone as great a change as if he had been convicted. Burke has been called “the first apostle and great upholder of integ-

city, mercy, and honor in the relation between his countrymen and their humble dependents.”

**Burke and France.**—The strongest influence that Burke exerted in his own time, was through his discussion of French affairs: first, in the *Reflections on the French Revolution*, and later, in the *Letters on a Regicide Peace*. Burke had long watched France with disapproval and alarm. He had noted a dangerous growth of revolutionary ideas, that boded no good to venerable French institutions. Events took precisely the turn that he had prophesied. What increased his alarm was the spread of the new ideas over Europe, and even into conservative England. Roused by what he regarded as the foolish and intemperate sympathy of many Englishmen with recent events in France, he turned to them with a passionate protest against the French Revolution. He loved the Past as a poet does; while, as a statesman, he clung with strong conviction to the established order of things as the only safety of society. His attitude toward the French Revolution cost him the friendship of the Whigs, with whom he had hitherto fraternized; and henceforth he frankly called himself a Tory. But while the Whig party disowned him, and the Whig papers advised him pointedly to resign his seat in Parliament, there were others who hailed him as “the savior of Europe,” and who declared that he had turned the tide of revolution. His *Reflections* were read far and wide, and had a powerful influence in checking the dangerous tendencies of that age. That Burke’s view of the French Revolution was a fair one, most students of history would question; but every reader must feel the vigor and splendor of his argument.

**The Last Years of Burke** were sad and lonely. He was a high-tempered man, and made many enemies. “A hunt of

obloquy," he says, had pursued him all his life. Nearly every cause that he had undertaken had been unpopular. His eloquent appeal in behalf of America was one of many efforts that had failed utterly. In his old age a deep bereavement overwhelmed him. He lost the son on whom he leaned. "The storm has gone over me," he wrote, "and I lie like one of those old oaks which the late hurricane has scattered about me. I am stripped of all my honors; I am torn up by the roots, and lie prostrate on the earth. . . . I am alone. I have none to meet my enemies in the gate. . . . I live in an inverted order. They who ought to have succeeded me, have gone before me. They who should have been to me as posterity, are in the place of ancestors." "Whether for thought or for action," he wrote in the *Regicide Peace*, "I am at the end of my career." He died on the 9th of July, 1797.

**Burke as an Orator.**—Edmund Burke was not a popular orator. He had not an imposing presence, or a fine voice. He had almost no humor, a quality indispensable in a speaker who pleases the multitude. "The length of his speeches, the profound and philosophical character of his argument, the splendor and often the extravagance of his illustrations, his passionate earnestness, his want of temper and discretion, wearied and perplexed the squires and merchants about him. He was known at last as 'the dinner-bell of the House,' so rapidly did its benches thin at his rising." Such is the testimony as to the oratory of Burke's later years. Even his best hearers, except on rare occasions, listened to him calmly. It was not till they read the speech that they found themselves under the spell of the orator.

**Burke as a Writer.**—Swift, it has been seen, was the most powerful political writer of the early part of the

eighteenth century; but Swift was a partisan, writing vehemently upon questions of the moment. Burke dismissed the selfish and personal, and addressed himself only to the wisdom and goodness of men. He discussed great themes in a noble style. His writings unite elevation of feeling and excited imagination with lucid reasoning and concise expression. They unite, moreover, the ease of conversation—its short, vigorous sentences and idiomatic expression—with the grace and dignity of literary prose. The orator's habit of speaking gave clearness and force to his writing; while the constant use of his pen gave precision, dignity, and elegance to his expression.

**Suggestions for Reading.**—*On American Taxation*,—*On Conciliation with America*;—Macaulay's *Essay on Warren Hastings*;—Burke (*English Men of Letters*), Chapters IV., VI., and X.

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**In this chapter we have considered:—**

1. *The Early Life of Burke.*
2. *Burke and America.*
3. *His Impeachment of Warren Hastings.*
4. *Burke and France.*
5. *The Last Years of Burke.*
6. *Burke as an Orator.*
7. *Burke as a Writer.*

## CHAPTER XV.

### OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

(1728-1774.)

"No man was more foolish when he had not a pen in his hand, or more wise when he had."—*Samuel Johnson*.

"He was a friend to virtue, and in his most playful pages never forgets what is due to it. A gentleness, delicacy, and purity of feeling distinguish whatever he wrote, and bear a correspondence to the generosity of a disposition which knew no bounds but his last guinea."—*Walter Scott*.

"His elegant and enchanting style flowed from him with so much facility that in whole quires he had seldom occasion to correct or alter a single word."—*Bishop Percy*.

"There was in his character much to love, but little to respect. His heart was soft even to weakness; he was so generous that he quite forgot to be just; he forgave injuries so readily that he might be said to invite them; and was so liberal to beggars that he had nothing left for his tailor and his butcher. He was vain, sensual, frivolous, profuse, improvident."—*T. B. Macaulay*.

"Think of him reckless, thoughtless, vain, if you like—but merciful, gentle, generous, full of love and pity. His humor delighting us still; his song fresh and beautiful as when first he charmed with it; his words in all our mouths; his very weaknesses beloved and familiar; his benevolent spirit seems still to smile on us; to do gentle kindnesses; to succor with sweet charity; to soothe, caress, and forgive; to plead with the fortunate for the unhappy and the poor."—*W. M. Thackeray*.

**Life.**—Most people love poetry, novels, and plays; and who that has written all three has written them so delightfully as Oliver Goldsmith? He is, by general consent, the most charming and versatile writer of the eighteenth cent-



ury. In his writings many traces of his personal history are found. His father was an Irish curate, and twice, at least, the son made a loving study of his character. Dr. Primrose, the Vicar of Wakefield, is said to have been a faithful portrait of the Rev. Charles Goldsmith, Vicar of Lissoy; while the village preacher of Sweet Auburn was also a picture of Goldsmith's father:—

“ A man he was to all the country dear,  
And passing rich with forty pounds a year;  
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,  
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change his place.

\* \* \* \* \*

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,  
And even his failings leaned to virtue's side;  
But in his duty prompt at every call,  
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all.

\* \* \* \* \*

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,  
His looks adorned the venerable place;  
Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,  
And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray.”

Oliver Goldsmith, scarred by the small-pox, was an ugly little fellow, and was thought by every one a dunce. On the play-ground, he was shy and awkward at the games in which other boys delighted. When seventeen years of age, he obtained a servant's scholarship at the University of Dublin, but did himself and his friends no credit at college. His family had set their hearts on his entering one of the learned professions, and Goldsmith left not one of them untried. He attempted to enter the Church, but made his application in scarlet clothes, which settled the question in the Bishop's mind. He next tried a position as tutor, but with small success. His relatives tried to make a lawyer of him, and finally persuaded him to attempt medicine. He studied at Edinburgh and at Leyden. It was from Leyden that he started on that tramp through

Europe which is now so famous. Who has not heard the story of Goldsmith and his flute?—how he wandered from village to village, playing for the peasants to dance on the green at nightfall, and so earning his supper and bed. It is not likely that he often went hungry,—that irresistibly good-natured young Irishman, with his ugly, comical face.

When Goldsmith came back to London, his life was still a wandering one. He found work in a chemist's shop; he became a proof-reader in the establishment of the famous printer, Mr. Samuel Richardson; he tried teaching once more. As a physician he had failed utterly. Some one advised Dr. Goldsmith never to prescribe for any but his enemies! Finally, he obtained employment as a book-reviewer. This was a dismal period of his life, but one not to be regretted. He was learning his trade as a writer. His literary apprenticeship was passed in writing school-books, prefaces, indexes, and reviews. In these years of obscure drudgery he composed the *Letters from a Citizen of the World*, giving a description of English life and manners in the assumed character of a Chinese traveler. He wrote a *Life of Beau Nash*; and prepared a short and attractive *History of England*, in the form of *Letters from a Nobleman to his Son*. He could not afford to write poetry, he said: "I cannot afford to court the draggle-tail muses, my lord; they would let me starve; but by my other labors I can make shift to eat, and drink, and have good clothes." He did occasionally turn aside from his daily drudgery to court the muses. His beautiful poem, *The Traveler*, appeared in 1764, and laid the foundation of his literary success. "There has not been so fine a poem since Pope's time," Dr. Johnson declared. Goldsmith became a remarkably popular and successful author. Many sentimental people think that the world used him very ill; but it certainly sent him friends and appreciation sooner than most writers find them. He was little

more than thirty before he was the friend of Burke, Reynolds, and Johnson, and a welcome member of their brilliant circle at The Club. He had not been long writing when his work commanded prices very respectable even by our present standards. But Goldsmith's folly and improvidence kept him plunged in debt. The inability to pay his tailor and his landlady pursued him through life. How *The Vicar of Wakefield* came into the world is a well-known story. Goldsmith's irate landlady having called in the sheriff, Goldsmith, in his turn, summoned Dr. Johnson, who sent him a guinea to pacify the woman. When the Doctor arrived on the scene, Goldsmith had changed the guinea, and was making merry over a bottle of wine. Johnson put the cork into the bottle, and told Goldsmith to rouse himself at once and consider how money should be raised. "He then told me," says Johnson, "that he had a novel ready for the press, which he produced to me. I looked into it and saw its merit; told the landlady I should soon return; and having gone to a bookseller, sold it for £60. I brought Goldsmith the money, and he discharged his rent, not without rating his landlady in a high tone for having used him so ill."

The publisher had bought and paid for the novel more out of courtesy to Dr. Johnson than because of any belief in it as a bargain. For two years the bookseller let it lie in his desk, until Goldsmith's *Traveler* had made his name of value. *The Vicar of Wakefield* was published in 1766, and has had a steady sale for a hundred and twenty years—a novel with a rare history.

Four years later, *The Deserted Village* appeared, and won Goldsmith new fame. In 1773, *She Stoops to Conquer* was first acted, and was a triumphant success. Honors in abundance were heaped upon Goldsmith in the last years of his life, but his unconquerable thriftlessness kept him the slave of the booksellers. "Honors to one in my situa-

tion," said poor Goldsmith, "are something like ruffles to a man that wants a shirt." He died at the age of forty-six, deeply mourned by the circle of friends to whom his very weaknesses had endeared him.

**Goldsmith's Poetry.**—Goldsmith, like Gray, produced little poetry, but what he did write was exquisite of its kind. Both of these men wrote in an age which encouraged prose rather than poetry. In Goldsmith's *Traveler* and *Deserted Village*, we find, as in Gray's *Elegy*, the care and polish that Pope had taught. We find, however, something more. In Goldsmith there is a tenderness and sentiment that are new to the poetry of his century. Pope wrote intellectual poetry, but Goldsmith appeals to the heart. Dowden sums up the elements of *The Traveler*: "description, reflection, mirth, sadness, memory, and love." All these are found in *The Deserted Village*. Each of these poems has, too, its moral. What Goldsmith teaches is, however, of trifling importance. In his tender, humorous, poetic description lies his charm.

**His Plays.**—Goldsmith's two comedies are *The Good-natured Man*, a comedy of character, and *She Stoops to Conquer*, a comedy of intrigue. The hero of the first is "a good-natured man," "foolish, open-hearted,—and yet all his faults are such that one loves him still the better for them." He is a man shown "in his humor," as Ben Jonson would have said, and that humor is over-amiability. *She Stoops to Conquer* depends for its interest not on its characters, but upon a series of lively and farcical incidents. Macaulay speaks of it as "an incomparable farce in five acts." The best proof of Goldsmith's success in this comedy is the constancy with which it has kept possession of the stage.

**The Vicar of Wakefield** is a remarkable picture of happy domestic life to have been written by a homeless man, who

tumbled about from one forlorn lodging-house to another. The novel is as faulty in plot as a novel could well be, and Goldsmith frankly tells us so in his preface. Astonishing things happen, yet they leave little impression on the reader. That which makes the life of the book is its portrayal of character. The Vicar himself is one of the foremost figures in English fiction. His wisdom of speech and simplicity of conduct are delightful. In him we love and revere piety and lofty sentiment, united with shrewd common sense. The group of women in the book is depicted with the gentle satire and sly humor of Addison. The moral teaching of *The Vicar of Wakefield* is sweet and pure. (P. 330.)

Goldsmith's style, like Addison's, has the charm of perfect quiet and simplicity. In the writing of Addison and Goldsmith, there is no apparent effort, no uneasy searching for the right word, no straining after effect. And in both these men, the French saying, that *the style is the man*, is exemplified. Irving wrote of Goldsmith:—

“The unforced humor, blending so happily with good feeling and good sense, and singularly dashed, at times, with a pleasing melancholy; even the very nature of his mellow and flowing and softly-tinted style, all seem to bespeak his moral as well as his intellectual qualities, and make us love the man at the same time that we admire the author.”

**Suggestions for Reading.**—*The Deserted Village, Retaliation, She Stoops to Conquer, The Vicar of Wakefield*;—Irving's *Life of Goldsmith*;—Goldsmith (*English Men of Letters*);—Macaulay's *Essay on Goldsmith*.

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**In this chapter we have considered:—**

1. *Goldsmith's Life.*
2. *His Poetry.*
3. *His Plays.*
4. *The Vicar of Wakefield.*



## CHAPTER XVI.

### EDWARD GIBBON.

(1737-1794.)

“We may correct and improve from the stores which have been opened since Gibbon’s time ; but the work of Gibbon as a whole, as the encyclopedic history of thirteen hundred years, as the grandest of historical designs, carried out alike with wonderful power and with wonderful accuracy, must ever keep its place. Whatever else is read, Gibbon must be read, too.”—*Edward A. Freeman.*

“We shall never have a greater historian in style as well as in matter, than Gibbon.”—*Saintsbury.*

**Historians of the Eighteenth Century.**—The eighteenth century, with its new development of prose, is famous for its historical writers. Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon gave history a place in literature that it had never held before. Some one has justly said that what was written before 1750, consisted of the materials of history, rather than of history itself ; in other words, that which existed before 1750 has not lived in literature. The writings mentioned in the first chapter of this book furnish valuable material to the historian, but it would be a misuse of language to call them historical literature. Sir Thomas More’s *Life of Edward V.* is the first English history that deserves the name. The narrative of Hall, which traces the fortunes of the Houses of Lancaster and York, is a valuable store-house of facts. The famous *Holinshed’s Chronicle* was the standard history of England in Shakespeare’s day. The Englishmen who had written before Raleigh, had dealt

only with their own country. He entered a wider field, and undertook the *History of the World*. The only historian of mark in the seventeenth century was Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, who wrote the *History of the Great Rebellion*. The eighteenth century brought a new spirit and method, and with Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon, began the modern science of history. (1.) David Hume was a Scotchman, a free-thinker in religion, and a philosopher. He wrote the *History of England*, a clear, vivacious, thoughtful, and philosophic work. He lacked the patience needed for laborious research among original authorities; and the fact that his work rests on material gathered by preceding writers, detracts from his greatness as an historian. (2.) William Robertson wrote a *History of Scotland*, a *History of America*, and *The History of the Emperor Charles the Fifth of Germany*. The last is his most important work. His narrative was eloquent, and his descriptions were vivid and picturesque; but Robertson, too, was lacking in accuracy of research. The most eminent historical writer of this group was Gibbon.

**Life.**—Edward Gibbon was born in 1737. Being a sickly boy, he received no regular schooling. He was, however, a voracious reader, devouring history, he tells us, like so many novels. The result of this lawless education, he continues, was “erudition that might have puzzled a doctor, and ignorance of which a school-boy should have been ashamed.” When Gibbon was sixteen, his father sent him to Oxford, where he spent two years. There he became a Roman Catholic. His family at once hurried him away to Switzerland, and placed him under the care of an eminent Protestant theologian. This worthy man was entrusted with the task of bringing his pupil back to the Protestant fold, a task accomplished in eighteen months. In Switzerland Gibbon began a course of sys-

tematic study, that gradually made him one of the most learned men of his time. A scholar by nature, he was indeed a self-taught, self-made man; for he was always his own best tutor. He wished, for instance, to improve his Latin, and he set about it in this way:—

“I translated an epistle of Cicero into French, and after throwing it aside till the words and phrases were obliterated from my memory, I retranslated my French into such Latin as I could find, and then compared each sentence of my imperfect version with the ease, the grace, the propriety of the Roman orator.”

Gibbon early had a love for Latin, and a strong interest in all that concerned old Roman life,—an intimation of the turn that his thoughts were to take in later years.

In Switzerland, moreover, Gibbon acquired sympathy with European life and thought, as distinguished from the English life and thought in which he had been reared. For four years he did not use the English language; and when he wrote his first essay, on the *Study of Literature*, he composed it, as a matter of course, in French. He not only talked and wrote, he thought French. Mme. du Deffand said to him, “You take such pains to be a Frenchman, that you deserve to have been born one.” Gibbon’s love affair is a well-known story. He became attached to the good, learned, and beautiful Mlle. Curchod; inexorable parents forbade the marriage, and the two lovers went their separate ways. Mlle. Curchod became the wife of the famous Necker, and the mother of Mme. de Staël. Gibbon never married.

In 1764 Gibbon took the memorable journey to Italy that decided his future. He tells us:—

“It was at Rome, on the 15th October, 1764, as I sat musing amid the ruins of the Capitol, while the barefooted friars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter, that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started to my mind.”

This plan was long contemplated “at an awful distance.” It was not till eight years after, when he returned to London, that Gibbon set himself to work. He was three years in preparing his first volume for the public. This appeared in 1776. He had been so doubtful about its reception that he entreated the publisher to prepare not more than five hundred copies. But edition after edition was called for. The book was a “mad success,” his biographer declares. Gibbon went steadily on with his work, and finished the six volumes of his history at the rate of one volume in two years. Meanwhile, he had taken a seat in Parliament, but political questions of the Present had little attraction for him. His mind was filled with the Past, and he was glad to escape to his retreat at Lausanne, where he could devote himself, without interruption, to the completion of his work. He describes the close of his great task as he did the beginning :—

“It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June, 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page, in a summer house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a *berceau*, or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on the recovery of my freedom, and perhaps the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion; and that, whatsoever might be the future fate of my history, the life of the historian must be short and precarious.”

Gibbon died in London, in 1794, at the age of fifty-seven.

**The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire** is one of the greatest monuments of human industry and genius. Gibbon was a man of daring scholar-

ship and invincible perseverance. He undertook a subject more vast, perhaps, than was ever before attempted by an historian. His story begins with the reign of Trajan, A.D. 98, and closes with the fall of the Eastern Empire, in 1453. These thirteen and a half centuries include not only the slow decline of the Roman Empire, but also the irruption of the barbarians, the establishment of the Byzantine power, the reorganization of the European nations, the foundation of the religious and political system of Mohammedanism, and the Crusades. The subject-matter that Gibbon moulded into shape is eloquently set before us by the French historian Guizot :—

“The gradual decline of the most extraordinary dominion which has ever invaded and oppressed the world; the fall of that immense empire, erected on the ruins of so many kingdoms, republics, and states both barbarous and civilized; and forming in its turn, by its dismemberment, a multitude of states, republics, and kingdoms; the annihilation of the religion of Greece and Rome; the birth and the progress of the two new religions which have shared the most beautiful regions of the earth; the decrepitude of the ancient world, the spectacle of its expiring glory and degenerate manners; the infancy of the modern world, the picture of its first progress, of the new direction given to the mind and character of man—such a subject must necessarily fix the attention and excite the interest of man, who cannot behold with indifference those memorable epochs, during which, in the fine language of Corneille, ‘Un grand destin commence, un grand destin s’achève.’”

(1.) That Gibbon could give shape and unity to such a mass of events is the first merit of his history.

(2.) The second merit is its originality, for Gibbon trusted to no other man’s labors. Much of his material had to be patiently gathered from the rubbish of the Byzantine annalists, and from the wild stories of the Eastern chroniclers. To bring light and order out of this chaos, the historian had to make himself familiar



with philosophy, religion, science, jurisprudence, and war, as they contributed to the civilization of the nations and ages described by him.

(3.) Gibbon showed the genius of the scholar in the preparation of his material; but this would have availed him little with posterity if he had not also possessed the genius of the writer. He himself says that he wrote and rewrote before attaining the style that he aimed at: "a middle tone between a dull chronicle and a rhetorical declamation." The stately tread of his sentences reminds the reader that he was the friend and admirer of Dr. Johnson; but if Gibbon's style is pompous, it may be urged that his subject is full of pomp. History will bear a more sonorous style than will any other kind of prose. "There is something truly epic in these later volumes," says Morison. "Tribes, nations, and empires are the characters; one after another they come forth like Homeric heroes, and do their mighty deeds before the assembled armies. The grand and lofty chapters on Justinian; on the Arabs; on the Crusades, have a rounded completeness, coupled with such artistic subordination to the main action, that they read more like cantos of a great prose poem than the ordinary staple of historical composition." (P. 336.)

No author lays himself open to fiercer criticism than the historian. Literary critics attack his style; scholars pick flaws in his statements; and, in Gibbon's case, the theologians have joined in denouncing him as the foe of Christianity. He has been regarded as one of the most dangerous enemies by whom the Christian faith has been assailed. Earnest men have taken up weapons against him, and, in some instances, have been betrayed by their zeal into an unfair warfare upon him. Lack of moral enthusiasm and elevation is, however, a marked defect of Gibbon.

**Suggestions for Reading.**—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Chapters LVIII. and LIX., on The Crusades;—Gibbon (*English Men of Letters*), Chapters VII. and IX.

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**In this chapter we have considered:—**

- 1. *The Historians of the Eighteenth Century.***
- 2. *The Life of Gibbon.***
- 3. *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.***

## CHAPTER XVII.

### ROBERT BURNS.

(1759-1796.)

“Whose lines are mottoes of the heart,  
Whose truths electrify the sage.”—*Campbell*.

“Burns is by far the greatest poet that ever sprung from the bosom of the people and lived and died in an humble condition.”—*Professor Wilson*.

“O he was a good-looking fine fellow!—he was that; rather black an’ ill-colored; but he couldna help that, ye ken. He was a strong, manly-looking chap; nane o’ your skilpit milk-and-water dandies: but a sterling, substantial fellow, who wadna hae feared the deil suppose he had met him. An’ then siccan an ee he had!”—*Memoir of Burns*.

“His person was strong and robust, his manners rustic, not clownish; a sort of dignified plainness and simplicity which received part of its effect perhaps from one’s knowledge of his extraordinary talents.

. . . . I think his countenance was more massive than it looks in any of the portraits. . . . There was a strong expression of sense and shrewdness in all his lineaments; the eye alone, I think, indicated the poetical temperament. It was large and of a dark cast, and glowed (I say literally glowed) when he spoke with feeling or interest. I never saw such another eye in a human head, though I have seen the most distinguished men in my time. His conversation expressed perfect self-confidence without the slightest presumption.”  
—*Sir Walter Scott*.

“None but the most narrow-minded bigots think of his errors and frailties but with sympathy and indulgence; none but the blindest enthusiasts can deny their existence.”—*James Hogg*.

“As a poet, Burns stands in the front rank. His conceptions are all original; his thoughts are new and weighty; his style unborrowed; and he owes no honor to the subjects which his muse selected, for they are ordinary, and such as would have tempted no poet, save himself, to sing about.”—*Allan Cunningham*.

**Poets of the Later Part of the Eighteenth Century.**—We have studied in Pope the writer who best represents the poetry of the early part of the eighteenth century. The poetry of the town and of high life had been cultivated by the Augustan writers; towards the close of the century the English poets began to find their inspiration in country life and in humble men and women. (1.) Thomson's *Seasons* was the first poetry that led people to Nature. It began to train a taste that was to find its highest delight in Wordsworth. (2.) Gray, in the *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*, takes for his theme "the rude forefathers of the hamlet." Poets had not heretofore thought it worth while to write of the poor and humble, to sing of man simply as man. Now we see stirring in English poetry the great theme—Liberty, Equality, Fraternity—that was thrilling all Europe in the last century. (3.) Cowper's *Task* describes the daily course of his quiet home life, his country walks, and winter evenings by the fire, his

"Home-born happiness,  
Fireside enjoyments, intimate delights."

And mingled with these pleasant themes are his thoughts on the great questions of his day. He was an original writer, and in nothing more original than in leaving behind the old forms of poetic expression, and in inventing for himself a simple, natural style.

But of all the poets of the eighteenth century, the man who sang of Nature and Man most tenderly and passionately, with the simplest and most natural feeling and expression, the man who was the truest poet, was Robert Burns.

**Life.**—He was born at the hamlet of Alloway, in Ayrshire, and was the son of a farmer of the humblest class. As Goldsmith left us the portrait of his father, so Burns, in

the *Cotter's Saturday Night*, has portrayed the fine old Scotch peasant, William Burns :—

“The cheerfu’ supper done, wi’ serious face,  
 They round the ingle, form a circle wide;  
 The sire turns o’er, wi’ patriarchal grace,  
 The big ha’-Bible, ance his father’s pride.  
 His bonnet rev’rently is laid aside,  
 His lyart haffets wearing thin an’ bare;  
 Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,  
 He wales a portion with judicious care,  
 And ‘Let us worship God!’ he says, with solemn air.  
 \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*  
 Then kneeling down, to Heaven’s Eternal King,  
 The saint, the father, and the husband prays.”

Poor as these people were, books and education were a necessity to them. Robert Burns sat at the table to eat, with a spoon in one hand and a book in the other, and carried a volume in his pocket to read in the fields. “I pored over it driving my cart,” he said, “or walking to labor, song by song, verse by verse, carefully noting the true, tender, sublime, or fustian.” Popular education was at that time more general in Scotland than in any other country of Europe; and Burns had received the training of the common school. *The Spectator*, and the volumes of Pope, Thomson, and Sterne were on the shelves in his father’s cottage, and Burns early made himself familiar with the masterpieces of English literature.

He grew up a farm-laborer. “This kind of life, the cheerless gloom of a hermit, with the unceasing moil of a galley-slave, brought me to my sixteenth year, when love made me a poet.” The song of *Handsome Nell* revealed to Burns a talent which proved to be the keenest happiness of his hard life :—

“My chief, amaisht my only pleasure.”



He had been ten years rhyming to please himself, when, being in special need of money, he put together his verses and tried their fortune with the public. They were printed, and copies found their way to Edinburgh. Burns was cordially advised to bring out an edition of his poems there, and to come in person to superintend the publication. Meanwhile, weary of the struggle with poverty, he had determined to cross the ocean and seek his fortune in the West Indies. On the last night that he expected to be in Scotland, he wrote in deep despondency, "The gloomy night is gathering fast." But the clouds broke with the dawn. There came the summons from Edinburgh, and the voyage to the New World was abandoned.

He says: "I immediately posted to Edinburgh, without a single acquaintance, or letters of introduction." But he needed none. His songs had gone before him. The new edition of his poems was received with enthusiasm, and "the Ayrshire Ploughman" was the lion of the season. The fashionable world tried to capture him for its drawing-rooms, lovely ladies petted and courted him, while grave and learned men welcomed him as their equal. The success of his poems gave him money to gratify his desire for travel, and he spent the summer of 1787 in visiting the places in Scotland most famous for their beauty or historic interest. He returned to Edinburgh the next winter, hoping that some substantial good might come from the praise and friendship he had won. He found that Edinburgh had relapsed into indifference, and that his new friends were not to be counted on. He went home an embittered man, and the record of his last years is sorrowful to read. All his life he had been a lover of good company. No merry-making was quite complete till the handsome, witty, lovable Robbie Burns joined in. He was always ready to drink every toast, to laugh and sing, and carouse till dawn.

The next day found him with a heavy head and a heavy heart. In 1791, five years before his death, Burns gave up his luckless farming, and moved with his wife and children to Dumfries. He was at this time employed as a gauger of liquors. He grew daily more reckless and irregular in his life.

Yet there were some bright days still ; for to the last ten years of Burns' life belong his most characteristic work. An Edinburgh publisher wishing to make a collection of old Scottish songs, told Burns of the project, roused his enthusiasm, and was promised by the poet all the aid in his power. Burns set down the words that he had heard crooned over and over from his babyhood,—here and there he touched a line, or added a stanza—oftener, he threw away the song entirely, and set the old tune to words of his own. To Johnson's Musical Museum he contributed one hundred and eighty-four songs that he had revised or written. To another collection he gave sixty. These gems of poetry were Burns' free gift to the world. Although his writings had by this time a substantial market value, he refused to take a penny for his songs. They were the purest delight of his last years. But at thirty-six he was broken in health and spirit. His passionate, turbulent life had worn him out. His death, in 1796, was received with an outburst of grief from the nation, and from that day the memory of Robert Burns has been one of Scotland's proudest treasures.

**The Poetry of Burns** is, first of all, simple, natural, and sincere. His poems grew out of his own experience ; they come straight from his heart, and go straight to ours. (1.) He writes of real people and real events. Scotch lads and lassies take the place of the shepherds and shepherdesses with Latin names who had overrun English poetry. His sentiment is deep and tender. The genuineness, simplicity,

and intensity of his poems of love may be seen in such lines as:—

“ Had we never lov’d sae kindly,  
Had we never lov’d sae blindly,  
Never met—or never parted,  
We had ne’er been broken-hearted.”

Scott said that these four lines contained “the essence of a thousand love-tales.”

Although Burns is first, perhaps, the poet of love, yet many other elements enter into his verse. (2.) He dwelt on a remote Ayrshire farm, but he was keenly alive to the stirring events of the American and the French Revolution. Burns was a natural thinker. His mind was made up on all the great questions of the day, and into his poetry went his free, fearless opinions. His famous poem, “A Man’s a Man for a’ That,” has the ring of our own Declaration of Independence. (3.) Burns was bitter and scornful when he saw some of the forms that religion took in his own country. He was unsparing in his satire of bigotry and hypocrisy. (4.) The interest in Nature that we have discovered in the poetry of this period is to be found in Burns; but with him it is always secondary to the human interest. When he writes of the “banks an’ braes o’ bonie Doon,” it is not to tell us of the “bonie Doon,” but of a young girl who has lost her lover:—

“ Ye banks an’ braes o’ bonie Doon,  
How can ye bloom sae fresh an’ fair?  
How can ye chant, ye little birds,  
An’ I sae weary fu’ o’ care!  
Thou’ll break my heart, thou warbling bird,  
That wantons thro’ the flowering thorn:  
Thou minds me o’ departed joys,  
Departed never to return.”

In the exquisite lines on the *Mountain Daisy*, Burns again makes the interest a human one before he ends the

poem. This tenderness for the daisy, and the gentleness and pity toward the mouse—the “wee, sleekit, cowrin, tim’rous beastie,” whose nest has been turned up by his plough,—these may belong to the new poetry, but they belong also to the loving heart of Burns himself.

(5.) His love for Scotland entered into all his poetry. His strongest desire was

“That I for poor auld Scotland’s sake  
Some usefu’ plan or book could make,  
Or sing a sang at least.”

A patriotic lyric that stirs the blood like a bugle-call, is Burns’

“Scots wha hae wi’ Wallace bled,  
Scots, wham Bruce has often led.”

(6.) The humor and pathos of Burns are such as we might look to find in so generously gifted a nature. There was a passionate tenderness in *Highland Mary* and *Mary in Heaven* “that thirled the heart-strings thro’ the breast” of every sensitive reader.

No other poem of Burns shows so many of his best qualities as *Tam o’ Shanter*. It is an admirable piece of storytelling: a livelier narrative poem is not to be found. It is full of fine description; there are shrewd character-drawing and vivid scenes from Nature. Burns loved a storm:—

“The wind blew as ’twad blawn its last;  
The rattling showers rose on the blast;  
The speedy gleams the darkness swallowed;  
Loud, deep, and lang the thunder bellowed;  
That night, a child might understand,  
The deil had business on his hand.”

The rollicking fun of *Tam o’ Shanter* makes it a master-piece of humor.

“The mirth and fun grew fast and furious,”

as Burns wrote on, till the poem is wound up to a frenzy of absurdity and terror.

But the songs of Robert Burns are, after all, what endear him to the world. He is the foremost lyric poet of Scotland, and of the English literature. (P. 339.)

**Suggestions for Reading.**—*The Cotter's Saturday Night, The Two Dogs, Tam o' Shanter, Poor Mailie's Elegy, To a Mountain Daisy, To a Mouse, Mary Morison, Tam Glen, Highland Mary, To Mary in Heaven, My Luve is like a Red, Red Rose, John Anderson, My Jo*;—Ward's *English Poets, Essay on Burns*;—Carlyle's *Essay on Burns*.

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**In this chapter we have considered:—**

- 1. Poets of the Later Part of the Eighteenth Century.**
- 2. Life of Burns.**
- 3. Characteristics of his Poetry.**



## CHAPTER XVIII.

WALTER SCOTT.

(1771-1832.)

“Scott, the delight of generous boys.”—*Emerson*.

“ Blessings and prayers in nobler retinue  
Than sceptred king or laureled conqueror knows,  
Follow this wondrous potentate.”—*Wordsworth*.

“No sounder piece of British manhood was put together in that eighteenth century of Time.”—*Carlyle*.

“The chronicler, taking up his pen, wrote in lines of light the annals of the chivalrous and heroic days of auld feudal Scotland. The nation then, for the first time, knew the character of its ancestors. . . . We know now the character of our own people as it showed itself in war and peace—in palace, castle, hall, hut, hovel, and shieling—through centuries of advancing civilization.”—*Prof. John Wilson*.

**Scott and Burns.**—When Burns made his famous visit to Edinburgh, his ardent admirer, Walter Scott, was a lad of fifteen. A memorable incident of Scott's boyhood occurred one night when, to his delight, he found himself actually in the presence of the poet. The talk of the company was about a picture which Burns held in his hand. Some lines were written below it, and all were trying in vain to recall the author, when young Scott modestly supplied the name. Burns gave him a word and a look that he treasured as long as he lived. This was the first and last meeting of the two men whose fame Scotland holds so dear. They both loved her, and found their best inspiration in her old songs and ballads, in the beauty of her scenery, and the romance of her history.

**The New Taste for Ballad Poetry.**—In considering the literary influences that surrounded Scott, we should take account of the newly developed taste for old ballad poetry. In 1765 Bishop Thomas Percy published a collection of old ballads under the title of *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*. Many of these poems had been preserved from early times only in manuscript, while others were roughly printed on single sheets, for circulation among the lower orders of people. Many writers before Percy,—men of taste and culture, like Sir Philip Sidney and Addison,—had felt the rude charm, the spirit and fire, of these ancient ballads. Said Sidney, “I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas, that I found not my heart more moved than with a trumpet.” Addison, in *The Spectator*, had written an elaborate and appreciative criticism of the Ballad of Chevy Chase. Gray, a man of exquisite culture, had loved the wild poetry of an earlier age. But interest was not thoroughly roused till Bishop Percy put the ballads before the public in a readable form. He found that the oldest and most interesting could be traced to the frontier region between England and Scotland, which had been the scene of such striking incidents of border warfare as those recorded in the noble ballads of *Chevy Chase* and the *Battle of Otterburn*. Many had been composed in the fifteenth century, in the barren period of English literature between Chaucer and Spenser. Bishop Percy gave also specimens of songs and ballads belonging to a comparatively late period of English history. The chief interest of his collection, and his chief service to literature, consists, however, in the older *Reliques*. The influence of this book was very marked. It was studied eagerly by each succeeding generation of English writers, and gave the first direction to the genius of more than one young poet. The boyish enthusiasm of Walter Scott was stirred by the vivid recitals of the old Border minstrels. “The

first time," said he, "I could scrape a few shillings together—which were not common occurrences with me—I bought unto myself a copy of those beloved volumes ; nor do I believe I ever read a book half so frequently, or with half the enthusiasm."

**Life of Scott.**—Walter Scott was born in Edinburgh in 1771. He was connected, both by the father's and by the mother's side, with several of those ancient, historic Border families, whose warlike memories gave him material for his romances. Scott's delicate health in boyhood proved an important influence upon his later life. He was sent for country air to his grandfather's farm, to a region "in which every field has its battle, and every rivulet its song." He lived much in the open air, and for hours together would lie on the grass gazing up into the sky, already entertaining himself in that enchanted world to which he afterwards led so many readers. He was petted by a devoted aunt, and was fairly pampered with stories. His lameness made him, moreover, a great reader. He devoured Eastern tales, fairy stories, and romances ; while Pope's *Homer* was dearer to him than any other poetry. The boy outgrew his invalid condition, though his lameness left him with a slight limp to the end of his life. He was sent to the High School, and then to the University of Edinburgh. Although his school and college career was by no means glorious, the teachers who called him a dunce were obliged before many years to change their minds. He lived, indeed, to regret the neglected opportunities of his school-days ; and he writes in his autobiography that he has felt "pinched and hampered by his ignorance through every part of his literary career." At the age of fifteen, he entered his father's law office as an "apprentice," and by 1792 was a full-fledged lawyer. At about this time he made the acquaintance of

the Scottish Highlands. His holiday excursions had no motive but pleasure ; but, said his companion, "He was makin' himsell a' the time. He didna ken maybe what he was about till years had passed ; at first, he tho't o' little, I dare say, but the queerness and the fun." Romance, poetry, and history were far more attractive to Scott than his law-books. His first appearance before the public was through an English version of a German poem. "Upon my word, Walter Scott is going to turn out a poet," said a lady who read the translation. He was then twenty-three, but several years pass before we hear of him again as an author. This time he is a collector, following in the steps of Bishop Percy. *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* contained the tales and ballads that for years Scott had been gathering in his holiday wanderings over Scottish hill and dale. He had made friends with the old crones of the country-side, and had jotted down in his note-book the ballads they had crooned to him. From collecting the songs of the old minstrels, it was but a step to writing ballads of his own. Indeed, if one were to trace the growth of Scott's writings, he might set it down somewhat in this fashion : *Percy's Reliques*, the ballads that he read ; *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, the ballads that he collected ; then *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, *Marmion*, *The Lady of the Lake*, the ballads that he wrote ; and, last, his novels, which are but his poems still, cut loose from rhyme and rhythm.

Scott was in 1799 appointed Sheriff of Selkirkshire, with an income that relieved him from petty cares, and gave him leisure to enter upon a literary life. The success of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, published in 1805, when he was thirty-four years old, decided his career. Poem after poem followed—*Marmion*, *The Lady of the Lake*, *Don Roderick*. They were received with rapturous enthusiasm. Scott was the literary lion of London and Edinburgh, but

his steady head was not turned. His fine good sense sustained him when the tide began to turn, and *Rokeby*, *Tri-ermain*, and *The Lord of the Isles* were, one after the other, received with fainter and fainter applause. The public was tired of the poet Scott. Byron's last poem was now the sensation of the hour. With his quiet, manly courage, Scott made no complaint, but turned his own thoughts in a different direction.

Years before, he had tossed off a few chapters of a novel, and had thought them worth submitting to a friend. The friend discouraged him, and he threw the novel aside, without further thought of prose composition. Nine years after, when he saw that poetry was failing him, he examined these opening chapters, and determined to finish the novel. In three weeks he had written the last two volumes of *Waverley*, and in a few weeks more it was the talk of the town. The book was published without the author's name, but many were shrewd enough to guess Scott's secret. The Great Unknown, says Carlyle, was "like a king traveling *incognito*." During the seventeen years between 1814 and 1831, Scott wrote his long series of novels, and with such inconceivable facility that, on an average, two appeared each year. During this period he was also writing history, criticism, and biography. The impulse to this extraordinary activity was Scott's passionate and long-cherished ambition to found a baronial estate, and to lead himself the life of a country magnate. In 1811 he had bought a hundred acres on the banks of the Tweed, and now, encouraged by the immense profits from his writings, he purchased one piece of land after another, planted and improved the estate, and gradually transformed his cottage into a castle. At Abbotsford Scott exercised a princely hospitality, entertaining the wits and the bores, the princes and the beggars, of every land. The greater part of his writing was done before his guests were



out of bed. He rose at five, and wrote till the nine-o'clock breakfast, then wrote two hours more, and by noon was "his own man."

To enlarge his income, Scott had meanwhile engaged secretly in commercial speculations, together with the printing and publishing firm of the Ballantynes, his intimate friends and former school-fellows. In 1825 the Ballantynes failed, and Scott, at the age of fifty-five, found himself financially ruined. By availing himself of the bankrupt law, he might have escaped the payment of the vast sums that his firm owed; but his sense of honor was so delicate that he resolutely set himself to pay off, by unceasing literary toil, debts amounting to one hundred and seventeen thousand pounds. He left Abbotsford, took humble lodgings in Edinburgh, and wrote early and late. *Woodstock* was his first novel after his misfortune. It was written in three months, and brought him £8,228. The nine volumes of the *Life of Napoleon* followed, and for that work he received £18,000. Thus encouraged, he toiled on, determined to pay the last guinea due to the creditors of his firm. Volume after volume came from his pen, and he had all but reached the goal, when wearied mind and body could toil no longer. He was sent to Italy in the vain hope of re-establishing his health; but he came back to Scotland only to die. On the 21st of September, 1832, he breathed his last, at Abbotsford. His body was buried in the beautiful old ruin of Dryburgh Abbey.

**Character of Scott.**—During the whole of a long and active career, Scott had hardly an enemy or a misunderstanding. He was the delight of society; for his conversation, though unpretending, kindly, and jovial, was full of old-world lore, acute and picturesque observation, and racy anecdote. There never was an author more totally free from the affectations of genius. He went through the world

simply, a man among men,—a capable sheriff and clerk of sessions, a good neighbor, a faithful friend. “God bless thee, Walter, my man!” said his old uncle. “Thou hast risen to be great, but thou wast always good.”

**The Poetry of Scott.**—The narrative poems of Scott were read with delight, because in subject, treatment, and verse they were new to the public. He was the first to interest readers in the legends and exploits of the Middle Ages. He was the first to introduce them to the beauty and romance of the Border country. “He turned the Highlands from a wilderness at the thought of which culture shuddered, into a place of universal pilgrimage.” It was this freshness of matter that made the first charm of Scott’s poetry. *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, *Marmion*, and *The Lady of the Lake*, undoubtedly reveal its best qualities. Scott himself said that the interest of the *Lay* depended mainly upon the style; that of *Marmion*, upon the descriptions; that of *The Lady of the Lake*, upon the incidents. The plots of these tales in verse are neither very probable nor very logically constructed, nor are the characters drawn with much skill. But both story and characters are so conceived as to allow the poet constant opportunity for striking situations and picturesque episodes. His poems are spirited and energetic; they are full of action rather than of reflection or feeling. He himself said: “I am sensible that if there be anything good about my poetry or prose either, it is a hurried frankness of composition, which pleases soldiers, sailors, and young people of bold and active dispositions.” In picturesque narrative verse Scott has never been surpassed; but his poetry is at the present day most valued for the beauty of its descriptive passages. As the companion of the traveler in Scotland, it has its most delightful use.

“Not Katrine in its mirror blue  
Gives back the shaggy banks more true”

than *The Lady of The Lake* reflects the beauty of the Highlands. No photographs of Scottish scenery convey its grandeur and loveliness so well; for Scott's pictures have always great beauty of color,—deep, rich greens, and the blue of sky and water. (P. 348.)

**Scott's Novels.**—Scott wisely abandoned verse, and wrote his romances in prose. His excellence as a novelist, like his excellence as a poet, lies in narration and description rather than in analysis or dramatic presentation of character. Scott was the prince of story-tellers. His novels are crowded with picturesque and absorbing incidents. Here, as in his poems, his aim was to produce striking pictorial situations rather than a closely woven plot. Here, also, he is great in description. The costumes and scenery of his novels are lavish and splendid. His treatment of character is that of a shrewd, genial, sensible man who is a keen observer, and who reports accurately what he sees. His heroes and heroines were drawn with least skill. It is in his minor characters, and especially those of humble life, that we see Scott at his best. As Scott's plots were rapidly and carelessly constructed, so were his sentences. While his style is genial and easy, it has many of the faults of hurried work. He wrote with marvelous speed and industry. A party of young men were one day standing at a window in Edinburgh, when their host bade them watch a certain window in the opposite house. A hand appeared, tossing down at regular intervals page after page of manuscript upon a rising heap. “It is the same every night,” said the host; “I can't stand the sight of it when I am not at my books. Still it goes on unwearied,—and so it will be till candles are brought in, and nobody knows how long after that.” The mysterious hand be-

longed to Walter Scott, and the book that he was writing was *Waverley*.

The author of *Ivanhoe* wrote without distinct moral purpose ; but the tone of Scott, man and writer, is chivalrous and elevating. No boy or girl can read the *Waverley* Novels without loving better

“Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisie.”

Scott has helped to form the ideals of many “generous boys.” At the same time he has done them a service in adding a new interest and delight to their lessons in history. Scholars may detect errors here and there, but no one can dispute the fact that Scott has added more than any one historian to the knowledge and appreciation of the Past. (P. 356.)

His novels are founded upon Scottish, English, and Continental history. Scott wrote other romances that may be classed as *Personal*, being founded upon private life or family legend. These deal for the most part with purely Scottish scenery and character. The following arrangement will assist the memory in recalling this large and varied cycle of works :—

#### I.—HISTORICAL.

I.—SCOTTISH..... *Waverley*. The Period of the Pretender’s attempt in 1745.

• *The Legend of Montrose*. The Civil War in the seventeenth century.

*Old Mortality*. The Rebellion of the Covenanters.

*The Monastery*, } The deposition and imprisonment of  
*The Abbot*. } Mary Queen of Scots.

*The Fair Maid of Perth*. The Reign of Robert III.

*Castle Dangerous*. The time of the Black Douglas.

II.—ENGLISH ..... *Ivanhoe*. The return of Richard Cœur de Lion from the Holy Land.

*Kenilworth*. The Reign of Elizabeth.

*The Fortunes of Nigel*. Reign of James I.

*Peveril of the Peak*. Reign of Charles II.; period of the pretended Catholic plot.

*Betrothed*. The Wars of the Welch Marches.

*The Talisman*. The Third Crusade ; Richard Cœur de Lion.

*Woodstock*. The Civil War and Commonwealth.

III.—CONTINENTAL... *Quentin Durward*. Louis XI. and Charles the Bold.  
*Anne of Geierstein*. The epoch of the Battle of  
 Nancy.  
*Count Robert of Paris*. The Crusaders of Byzantium.

## II.—PERSONAL.

*Guy Mannering*.  
*The Antiquary*.  
*Black Dwarf*.  
*Rob Roy*.  
*The Heart of Midlothian*.  
*The Bride of Lammermoor*.

*The Pirate*.  
*St. Ronan's Well*.  
*Redgauntlet*.  
*The Surgeon's Daughter*.  
*The Two Drovers*.  
*The Highland Widow*.

**Suggestions for Reading.**—*Quentin Durward*,—*The Lady of the Lake*;—Irving's *Visit to Abbotsford*;—Ward's *English Poets*,—*Essay on Scott*;—Leslie Stephen's *Hours in a Library*,—*Essay on Scott*.

**In this chapter we have considered:—**

1. *Scott and Burns*.
2. *The New Taste for Ballad Poetry*.
3. *Life of Scott*.
4. *His Character*.
5. *His Poetry*.
6. *His Novels*.



## CHAPTER XIX.

### LORD BYRON.

(1788-1824.)

"I found Lord Byron in the highest degree courteous, and even kind. We met for an hour or two almost daily in Mr. Murray's drawing-room, and found a great deal to say to each other. . . . His reading did not seem to me to have been very extensive, either in poetry or history. Having the advantage of him in that respect, and possessing a good competent share of such reading as is little read, I was sometimes able to put under his eye objects which had for him the interest of novelty."—*Walter Scott*.

"Never had any writer so vast a command of the whole eloquence of scorn, misanthropy, and despair."—*T. B. Macaulay*.

"To this day English critics are unjust to him. . . . If ever there was a violent and madly sensitive soul, but incapable of being otherwise; ever agitated, but in an enclosure without issue; predisposed to poetry by its innate fire, but limited by its natural barriers to a single kind of poetry—it was Byron's."—*H. A. Taine*.

**Life of Byron.**—George Gordon, Lord Byron, was born in London, in 1788. His father was a worthless aristocrat; his mother was a woman of violent temper, who by turns caressed and coddled her little boy, and pursued him with poker and tongs. She and her husband quarreled incessantly, till he at last made off to the Continent with the remnant of her fortune that he had not already squandered. Byron and his mother lived together in poverty and obscurity till, at the age of eleven, he became heir to the title and estates of one of the most aristocratic families in England. He inherited the noble and picturesque residence of Newstead Abbey, near Nottingham. Lord Byron, as

the boy was now called, was sent to Harrow, and afterward to Trinity College, Cambridge. His school-days were much like the rest of his life. He was capable of "violent fits of work," with periods of incorrigible idleness. Though he was no student, he was a voracious reader. "I read eating," he said, "read in bed, read when no one else reads."

While at Cambridge, in his twentieth year, Byron made his first appearance as a poet, publishing a small volume called appropriately enough *Hours of Idleness*. The fact that it was written by a young peer of the realm helped to bring upon it the merciless ridicule of the Whigs in the *Edinburgh Review*. Byron gulped down the criticism of his poems, and prepared to take his revenge. *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* was not only a fierce attack upon his critics, but also upon nearly all the literary men of the day—Scott, Wordsworth, Moore, and many others, from whom he had received no provocation whatever. Of Scott he wrote :—

"Thus Lays of Minstrels—may they be the last!—  
On half-strung harps whine mournful to the blast."

And because Scott had sold the copyright of *Marmion* for a thousand pounds, Byron wrote :—

"Let such forego the poet's sacred name,  
Who rack their brains for lucre, not for fame."

It was to the credit of both men that they afterward became warm friends. The generous Scott said : "I have ever reckoned Burns and Byron the most genuine poetic geniuses of my time, or of half a century before me."

Byron had no sooner finished his university studies than he set out on a tour of the Continent. This was in fact Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. When he returned to England, he brought with him four thousand lines of poetry

as a souvenir of his travels in Greece, Turkey, and the East. This poetry was perhaps the most brilliant journal that a traveler has ever kept. The first two cantos of *Childe Harold* were published in 1812, when Byron was but twenty-four. Seven editions were exhausted in four weeks. "I awoke one morning," says Byron, "and found myself famous." *Childe Harold* and its author were at the height of the fashion. Byron gave himself up to society and poetry. *Childe Harold* was followed in rapid succession by *The Giaour*, *The Bride of Abydos*, *The Corsair*, and *Lara*. "I wrote *Lara*," he says, "while undressing after coming home from balls and masquerades, in the year of revelry 1814. *The Bride* was written in four, *The Corsair* in ten days." Byron was a popular novelist in verse. His tales were sensational, often powerful. The freshness of his material roused the interest of the public. Scott had drawn his subjects from feudal and Scottish life; Byron broke up new ground in describing the manners, scenery, and wild passions of the East and of Greece—a region as picturesque as that of his rival, and as fresh to his readers.

At about this time Byron married Miss Milbanke, a lady of fortune. It is doubtful if any woman could have been a happy wife of Lord Byron; but the austere Lady Byron was certainly most miserable. A year after their marriage she suddenly left her husband. Much of the evil reported of him may have been true, but enough was false to embitter him for life against British society. In 1816, at the age of twenty-eight, he left England, never to return. Thenceforth his life was passed on the Continent, in Switzerland, in Italy, and in Greece, where he solaced himself with bitter attacks upon all that his countrymen held most sacred. While at Geneva he wrote the third canto of *Childe Harold*, *The Prisoner of Chillon*, *Manfred*, and *The Lament of Tasso*. Byron's life in Italy and Switzer-

land was that of a wanderer. Arriving at Ravenna, he writes, "I may stay a day—a week—a year—all my life." Ravenna, Pisa, and Venice are the cities with which he is most closely associated. The last eight years of his life—the years in Italy—were marvelously productive. One work after another was sent back to England, and received there with the keenest eagerness and excitement by delighted and scandalized readers. To this period belong also *Mazeppa*, *Don Juan*, *The Two Foscari*, *Cain*, and *Werner*.

The last episode of Byron's life was the most romantic, and, by a happy fate, the noblest in his career.

"Nothing in his life  
Became him like the leaving it."

The highest sentiment of his nature was a love of liberty, and his noblest aspiration was for the freedom of Italy and of Greece, the two countries that he loved best. He had written long ago :—

"The mountains look on Marathon—  
And Marathon looks on the sea;  
And musing there an hour alone,  
I dreamed that Greece might still be free,  
For standing on the Persian's grave,  
I could not deem myself a slave."

In 1823 he determined to devote his fortune and his influence to the aid of the Greeks, then struggling for their independence. All the finest qualities of the man came to the front: his splendid physical courage, his firmness and daring. In filling his heart and soul with a noble cause, and in giving all his energy to its active service, Byron seemed to be entering upon a new life.

Byron died of malarial fever, at Mesolonghi, at the age of thirty-six.

**Childe Harold.**—Those who had jeered at *Hours of Idleness*, recognized in *Childe Harold* the arrival of an unmistakable poet. The book, as we have seen, had at once an immense popularity. Travelers find it the most fascinating guide-book ever written, while lovers of poetry delight in its beauty and sentiment. The hero, *Childe Harold*, is Byron himself. His interest is divided between the lovely and the historic scenes of his travels and the contemplation of his own unhappy mind. He is always gloomy and always poetical. The first canto describes Portugal and Spain; the second carries the wanderer to Greece and the Ægean Archipelago; in the third and finest, Switzerland, Belgium, and the Rhine give opportunity not only for exquisite passages of description, but for musings upon Napoleon, Voltaire, Rousseau, and other great men, whose renown has thrown new glory over enchanting scenes; in the fourth canto the reader is borne over the fairest part of Italy—Venice, Ferrara, Florence, Rome, and Ravenna. The immortal dead of Italy, and her masterpieces of painting and sculpture, are described with a passionate feeling that had never before been shown in descriptive poetry. The third and fourth cantos were written several years later than the first two, and show the increasing power of Byron as he grew older. A nobler inspiration is to be found in the latter half of *Childe Harold* than anywhere else in his poetry. (P. 362.)

**Metrical Romances.**—The great mass of Byron's earlier work consists of tales in verse. Scott's narrative poems were then delighting the world, and Byron, borrowing his free and easy metres, set about writing a series of Oriental romances. But he had not the story-telling gift of Scott. He was absorbed in the passions and woes of the gloomy, mysterious, and cynical hero who appears in all his poems, and who was no other than the self-conscious poet himself.



Byron created but two characters—a man contemptuous of other men, skeptical, and despairing, yet with moments of kindly, generous feeling ; and a woman devoted and loving, but loving with unreasoning affection. Throughout these poems we meet with animated and beautiful description. The following lines begin the tale of *Parisina* :—

“ It is the hour when from the boughs  
 The nightingale’s high note is heard ;  
 It is the hour when lovers’ vows  
 Seem sweet in every whisper’d word ;  
 And gentle winds, and waters near,  
 Make music to the lonely ear.  
 Each flower the dews have lightly wet,  
 And in the sky the stars are met,  
 And on the wave is deeper blue,  
 And on the leaf a browner hue,  
 And in the heaven that clear obscure,  
 So softly dark, and darkly pure,  
 Which follows the decline of day,  
 As twilight melts beneath the moon away.”

Of Byron’s tales in verse, the short poems of *The Prisoner of Chillon* and *Mazeppa* are the most natural and beautiful.

*Don Juan* is the longest and the most characteristic, the most witty, brilliant, and lawless of Byron’s poems. Its purpose was not so much to tell a story as to supply an outlet for Byron’s experiences and opinions of the world and society. It was in this poem that he made his most savage attack on English society. *Don Juan*, flippant as it is, contains profound and melancholy satire. Its blasphemy and indecency banish it from the higher ranks of poetry. It is to the credit of the moral sense of English readers that only works sound at the core are allowed to become the classics of our literature.

**Byron’s Dramatic Works.**—Byron’s most ambitious poetry was in dramatic form ; but his self-consciousness made his

success as a dramatist impossible. In his narrative poems, he never could forget himself ; nor could he in his plays. They are hardly more than monologues spoken by Lord Byron. In *Cain* and in *Manfred*, his two finest dramas, he sets before us with great power the struggles that rend his own soul. The scene of *Manfred* is among the Alps, in the presence of the Jungfrau. Byron had a natural affinity with the sublime. He loved the mountains and the ocean, but even with them he never forgot himself. They filled him with tumultuous feeling, but it was because he found himself and his own moods reflected everywhere. In a dark and lonely mountain peak he saw the symbol of his own life ; and the ocean,

“——boundless, endless, and sublime,  
The image of eternity, the throne  
Of the invisible,”

was dear to Byron, because he felt himself its child. Yet some of his best moments were spent in communion with Nature, as some of his best poetry describes her various aspects.

**General Characteristics of Byron's Poetry.**—The marvelous rapidity with which he wrote was proof of Byron's energy and power. The verses flow easily, simply, and naturally ; they are never involved or obscure. The fluency of his verse led, however, to his greatest faults. He is often diffuse and poor in thought and imagination. This is not the poetry that we read, reread, and return to again. Byron never rewrote a poem. He said, “I am like the tiger. If I miss the first spring, I go grumbling back to my jungle again ; but if I do it, it is crushing.”

It was a characteristic principle in all Byron's conduct that he would never “try again” ; and only by trying again is literary work made evenly good. Byron's poetry

is always uneven. He is full of brilliant passages ; and, in saying this of a poet, we are making an apology for him. It implies that he cannot give completeness to his work, that he cannot or will not round out and make perfect every part.

**Foreign Appreciation of Byron.**—Whatever may be the final value that his own countrymen set upon Byron, the fact remains that in the eyes of foreigners he is the English poet next in rank to Shakespeare. Goethe's admiration for him was unbounded. He calls Byron "the representative of the modern poetic era"—"undoubtedly to be regarded as the greatest genius of our century." Taine says of him :—

"He is so great and so English that from him alone we shall learn more truths of his country and of his age than from all the rest put together. His ideas were proscribed during his life ; it has been attempted to depreciate his genius since his death. Even at the present day, English critics are hardly just to him. A foreign critic may be more impartial, and freely praise the powerful hand whose blows he has not felt."

**Contemporary Poets.**—In a distant view of our own age, the first half of the nineteenth century will probably be held famous for its poetry, and the second half for its prose.

(1.) Thomas Moore, the friend and biographer of Byron, was an Irishman, and in his *Irish Melodies* his best poetry is to be found. He composed these lyrics, as Burns had written his Scotch songs, in order to furnish appropriate words to old national airs. *'Tis the Last Rose of Summer*, and *Oft in the Stilly Night* are well-known songs of Moore. His long narrative poem, *Lalla Rookh*, was much admired in its day. (2.) A far greater poet was Percy Bysshe Shelley. No more highly imaginative nature is to be met in all English literature. The most characteristic faults and

beauties of a poet's mind and character were united in Shelley. He dwelt in a world vast, distant, and unreal, and his poetry is mysterious and ethereal. The lyric drama of *Prometheus Unbound* is his most splendid work. *The Cloud*, *To a Skylark*, and *Ode to the West Wind*, show his exquisite gift as a lyric poet. Shelley died in his thirtieth year; Keats died at the age of twenty-five. Both men were of remarkable promise, and, had they lived, might have been among the first of English poets. (3.) Keats loved beauty passionately, and filled his poetry with all that was rich and rare. His subjects, his pictures, his very words, are beautiful and luxuriant. In his short life he wrote several poems that are worthy to live, among them *Endymion*, *Hyperion*, *Lamia*, and *The Eve of St. Agnes*. (4.) Thomas Hood was a poet of a distinctly different type. Humor and pathos were his gifts, rather than imagination. *The Bridge of Sighs* and the *Song of the Shirt* show his peculiar powers, and the earnestness and tenderness of his heart. (5.) Elizabeth Barrett Browning has been the most eminent poet among women. She had many of the qualities of the poet: thought, passion, and imagination. Her writing, however, was uneven and ill-controlled. *Aurora Leigh* is her most characteristic work. (6.) Thomas Campbell was the author of *Pleasures of Hope*, and of several noble lyrics. *Hohenlinden*, *Ye Mariners of England*, and the *Battle of the Baltic* are stirring poems of war. (7.) As poets, Leigh Hunt and Walter Savage Landor stand between the age of Scott and Byron and the age of Tennyson and Browning. Hunt's poetry is graceful, sprightly, and full of fancy. His most important writings, however, were his prose contributions to periodicals. (8.) Landor's best poetry is found in his *Hellenics*, or imitations of Greek thought and style. His most valuable writing was, like Leigh Hunt's, in prose form. Landor's *Imaginary Conversations of Literary*

*Men and Statesmen* give him his place in English literature.

**Suggestions for Reading.**—*Selected Poems of Byron*, edited by Matthew Arnold ; Preface by Matthew Arnold ;—Ward's *English Poets*,—*Essay on Byron* ;—Whipple's *Essays and Reviews*,—*Essay on Byron*.

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**In this chapter we have considered:—**

1. *The Life of Byron.*
2. *Childe Harold.*
3. *Byron's Metrical Romances.*
4. *His Dramatic Works.*
5. *General Characteristics of his Poetry.*
6. *Foreign Appreciation of Byron.*
7. *Contemporary Poets.*



## CHAPTER XX.

### WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

(1770-1850.)

"I do not know a man more to be venerated for uprightness of heart and loftiness of genius."—*Walter Scott*.

"To feel for the first time a communion with his mind, is to discover loftier faculties in our own."—*Thomas N. Talfourd*.

"Whatever the world may think of me or of my poetry is now of little consequence; but one thing is a comfort of my old age, that none of my works written since the days of my early youth, contains a line which I should wish to blot out because it panders to the baser passions of our nature. This is a comfort to me; I can do no mischief by my works when I am gone."—*William Wordsworth*.

"Wordsworth's poetry is great because of the extraordinary power with which Wordsworth feels the joy offered to us in nature, the joy offered to us in the simple primary affections and duties; and because of the extraordinary power with which, in case after case, he shows us this joy, and renders it so as to make us share it."—*Matthew Arnold*.

**The Lake Poets.**—The so-called "Lake Poets" were Coleridge, Southey, and Wordsworth, three friends and neighbors in the English Lake country. The name "Lake School" was first flung contemptuously at them by the critics, and has since clung to them in more serious earnest than was intended. The three men were congenial companions, but their poetry has but few qualities in common. (1.) *The Ancient Mariner* of Coleridge holds a unique place in English poetry. It is a poem perfect of its kind. For power of imagination, picturesqueness, and music it is

unsurpassed. Coleridge wrote much in prose upon critical and philosophical subjects. (2.) Southey composed several long narrative poems and many short pieces. His poetry was respectable, but not of lasting beauty or power. Southey was a useful and sensible, often a delightful writer of prose. His *Life of Nelson* has become a classic.

**Other Friends of Wordsworth** were Hazlitt, Lamb, and De Quincey. (1.) Hazlitt was one of the first professional critics. He possessed a fine taste and picturesque style, and was a popular lecturer and magazine contributor in the early part of this century. (2.) The *Essays of Elia* were written by Charles Lamb, an exquisite humorist, and a lovable man. These short, unpretending essays are rich in wit and wisdom, and filled with dainty and piquant felicities of expression. Their unconventional style has all the personal charm of the writer. (3.) Thomas De Quincey was a critic of rare delicacy, and a masterly writer of English prose. The best known of his writings, *The Confessions of an Opium-eater*, is remarkable for the fearful picturesqueness of its descriptions and for the beauty of its style.

**The Life of Wordsworth** was singularly uneventful. He was born and reared in Cumberland, the Lake Country of England, and there he spent the greater part of his life. To the traveler it is still "Wordsworth's country"; every lake and stream and mountain is more beautiful because of his poetry.

Wordsworth was sent, when a lad of nine, to a school at Hawkshead, in the most picturesque district of Lancashire. His school-days were divided between his love of books and his love of out-door life. His career at the university was creditable, but not brilliant. After taking his degree at Cambridge, in 1791, he went to France, and threw himself

with all his youthful enthusiasm into the cause of the French revolutionists. When the fierce struggle for liberty in France had ended in the despotism of Napoleon, Wordsworth, after a season of bitter disappointment and despondency, returned to his English conservatism, and remained to the end of his days a sober, old-fashioned Tory. Wordsworth was poor. None of the learned professions tempted him, and he had no inclination for an active business life. His desire was to be a poet; he describes in the *Prelude* his solemn consecration of himself to poetry:—

“Ah! need I say, dear Friend, that to the brim  
My heart was full: I made no vows, but vows  
Were then made for me; bond unknown to me  
Was given, that I should be, else sinning greatly,  
A dedicated Spirit.”

When he was twenty-five, he was made free to follow his inclination. His friend Raisley Calvert died, and, with a loyal faith in Wordsworth, left him a legacy of £900, and besought him to devote his life to poetry. For a few years he lived in the south of England, with his sister. Coleridge was his neighbor, and became his intimate friend. In their long walks together, they talked of a tour in Germany, and discussed the possibility of raising funds for the journey. The two friends agreed to publish together a little volume of poems, which they called *Lyrical Ballads*. Coleridge's share of the book was *The Ancient Mariner*. Of the poems that Wordsworth contributed, some were among the best, some were among the worst that he ever wrote. The critics were savage in their attack upon the little volume. The reviews rang with merriment over the absurdities of both poets; yet this volume contained not only *The Ancient Mariner*, but the *Lines Written Above Tintern Abbey*, one of the most characteristic and beautiful of Wordsworth's poems. After a few months in Ger-

many, he returned to England, and, just at the close of the last century, took up his abode again in the Lake Country. Wordsworth was blessed with the love and companionship of two noble women,—his wife and his sister. His beautiful tribute to his wife is one of the best known among his poems :—

“ A creature not too bright or good  
 For human nature's daily food;  
 For transient sorrows, simple wiles,  
 Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.  
       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*  
 The reason firm, the temperate will,  
 Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;  
 A perfect woman, nobly planned,  
 To warn, to comfort, and command;  
 And yet a spirit still, and bright  
 With something of an angel light.”

Wordsworth's sister Dorothy was herself almost a poet. She had, like her brother, a sensitive delight in Nature, and a vigorous imagination; but the poetry that was in her found its only expression in her brother's verse. In notes from her diary may be found the germs of some of his most exquisite poems.

In 1813 the family left Grasmere for Rydal Mount, the home now most closely associated with the memory of Wordsworth. Their life was simple and frugal, following closely the poet's own text, “plain living and high thinking.” Meanwhile, undismayed by the ill-luck of his *Lyrical Ballads*, he issued a new volume of poems, which met with the same fate. Fortunately, he was not dependent on the earnings of his pen, for, in addition to the legacy of Calvert, Wordsworth had been paid a debt of £8,500, due to his father at the time of his death. From year to year he sent his poems into the world, regardless of money or fame. He told a friend that for years his poetry did

not bring him in enough to buy his shoe-strings ! But at last the tide turned. Gradually the lovers of Wordsworth increased, till, in the years between 1830 and 1840, his hard-won fame culminated. Byron and Scott were gone ; till Tennyson appeared, Wordsworth was the foremost poet of England. Public honors were heaped upon him. The universities gave him their honorary degrees. He received a government pension, and, in 1843, was made Poet Laureate. He died April 23, 1850, at the age of eighty.

**Wordsworth's Theory of Poetic Diction.**—Wordsworth's place in the history of English poetry is of great interest and importance. To understand what he accomplished, we must recall the characteristics of the eighteenth century poets. They had cared more for Art than for Nature, for the town than for the country, for high life than for low life ; and they had, as we have seen, established a separate language for poetry, which they chose to regard as something quite apart from every-day life. In the latter part of the century, however, Cowper had ventured to write in simple, homely language, and Burns had boldly used his hearty Scotch dialect. The change from the style of Pope had already begun when Wordsworth appeared, but it found in him its strongest supporter. He attacked the old poetic diction, and maintained that the true and literal word is always dignified, and suitable alike for poetry or prose. Wordsworth was partly right and partly wrong : he was entirely right in rejecting stilted and artificial language, but he was wrong in putting into its place the diction of prose. The words used in poetry and prose should be different, because they are employed to express two different states of mind. The language of excitement and exaltation is ridiculous in dealing with plain facts ; while the language of calm, every-day prose, is equally absurd when used for the expression of elevated



feeling. The very rhythm of poetry is intended to convey emotion, and this emotion requires a form of expression raised above ordinary speech. It demands simple, but not homely language,—a distinction that Wordsworth did not clearly make. He fell often into the absurd and the grotesque, in his attempt to use homely subjects and homely language. Fortunately, he did not always carry out his theory. If he had used only a peasant's vocabulary, he could not have written the *Ode on Immortality*. A few lines of his finest poetry show that his practice was wiser than his teaching. In the following verses he is describing the effects of the pealing organ in King's College Chapel, with its "self-poised roof, scooped into ten thousand cells":—

“ But from the arms of silence—list! O list—  
The music bursteth into second life;  
The notes luxuriate, every stone is kissed  
With sound, or ghost of sound, in mazy strife!”

**Wordsworth and his Fellow-men.**—Wordsworth's peculiar use of language awakens the interest of the reader. His attention will next be drawn to the two subjects that fill Wordsworth's poetry,—Nature and Man. He honored Man, and bent “in reverence,” he says,

“ To Nature, and the power of human minds,  
To men as they are men within themselves.  
How oft high service is performed within,  
When all the external man is rude in show,—  
Not like a temple rich with pomp and gold,  
But a mere mountain chapel, that protects  
Its simple worshipers from sun and shower.  
Of these, said I, shall be my song; of these,  
If future years mature me for the task,  
Will I record the praises, making verse  
Deal boldly with substantial things.

\* \* \* \* \*

Nature for all conditions wants not power  
 To consecrate, if we have eyes to see,  
 The outside of her creatures, and to breathe  
 Grandeur upon the very humblest face  
 Of human life."

Wordsworth's poetry was filled with the same spirit that had kindled Burns :—

" For a' that, and a' that,  
 Our toils obscure, and a' that;  
 The man's the gowd for a' that."

Says Stopford Brooke :—

" He was the first who threw around the lives of homely men and women the glory and sweetness of song, and taught us to know the brotherhood of all men in a more beautiful way than the wild way of the Revolution."

Wordsworth's doctrine that "the whole range of the beautiful, the pathetic, the tragic, the heroic, was to be found in common, lowly life," was new to the world when he taught it. Since his day, our greatest novelists have made it familiar, till the interest in poor and humble men and women has become one of the most marked characteristics of the poetry and fiction of the nineteenth century. It was in this spirit that George Eliot wrote of the "sad fortunes of Amos Barton," or Wordsworth told the humble tragedy of *Michael*.

Wordsworth was a true poet in his attitude toward children. The mind of a child was to him the most sacred and beautiful thing that he beheld. It kindled his imagination, and inspired in him the fanciful but beautiful belief that

" Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:  
 The soul that riseth with us, our life's Star,  
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
 And cometh from afar;

Not in entire forgetfulness,  
 And not in utter nakedness,  
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
     From God, who is our home:  
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy!  
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
     Upon the growing Boy,  
 But He beholds the light, and whence it flows  
     He sees it in his joy;  
 The Youth, who daily farther from the East  
     Must travel, still is Nature's priest,  
     And by the vision splendid  
     Is on his way attended;  
 At length the Man perceives it die away,  
 And fade into the light of common day."

**Wordsworth and Nature.**—Wordsworth loved humble men and children, because he loved everything as Nature had made it. His feeling toward Nature was new in his time. No poet had lived to whom she was so near and dear and human. He turned to her for comfort, inspiration, and revelation. What Nature was to Wordsworth he himself tells best in the beautiful lines written near *Tintern Abbey*. Alone with hills and streams, he said :

“ I have felt  
 A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
 Of elevated thoughts : a sense sublime  
 Of something far more deeply interfused,  
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
 And the round ocean and the living air,  
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man :  
 A motion and a spirit, that impels  
 All thinking things, all objects of all thought,  
 And rolls through all things.”

Wordsworth is “ well pleased to recognize in Nature ”

“ The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,  
 The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul  
 Of all my moral being.”

“ Nature never did betray  
 The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,  
 Through all the years of this our life, to lead  
 From joy to joy: for she can so inform  
 The mind that is within us, so impress  
 With quietness and beauty, and so feed  
 With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,  
 Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,  
 Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all  
 The dreary intercourse of daily life,  
 Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb  
 Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold  
 Is full of blessings.”

This was Wordsworth's belief and his teaching. A beautiful simile that he once used expresses his own attitude toward the universe. Every child has held a shell to his ear, and listened to the sound of the sea. Who but Wordsworth would have turned the simple incident to a meaning so beautiful as this? The child presses the shell to his ear,—

“ To which, in silence hushed, his very soul  
 Listened intensely, and his countenance soon  
 Brightened with joy; for, murmuring from within,  
 Were heard sonorous cadences, whereby  
 To his belief the monitor expressed  
 Mysterious union with its native sea.  
 Even such a shell the universe itself  
 Is to the ear of Faith.”

Wordsworth was not only a poet; he was a teacher. By the study of what he wrote we may learn how to live more wisely, happily, and nobly. His poetry has fulfilled his ambition: “to console the afflicted; to add sunshine to daylight by making the happy happier; to teach the young and the gracious of every age to see, to think, and to feel.”

**Suggestions for Reading.**—*We are Seven, The Leech-Gatherer, I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud, She was a Phantom of Delight, Ode on Intimations of Immortality, Lines Written Near Tintern Abbey, Fragment from The Recluse, Sonnets 8, 19, 23, 24, 25, 27, 29, 39, 40,*—from selected *Poems of Wordsworth*, edited by Matthew Arnold; Preface by Matthew Arnold;—Lowell's *Essay on Wordsworth*.

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**In this chapter we have considered:—**

- 1. *The Lake Poets.***
- 2. *Other Friends of Wordsworth.***
- 3. *The Life of Wordsworth.***
- 4. *His Theory of Poetic Diction.***
- 5. *Wordsworth and His Fellow-men.***
- 6. *Wordsworth and Nature.***



## CHAPTER XXI.

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY.

(1800-1859.)

“Macaulay’s style, like other original things, has already produced a school of imitators. Its influence may be distinctly traced both in the periodical and daily literature of the day. Its great characteristic is the shortness of the sentences and the rapidity with which new and distinct ideas or facts succeed each other in his richly-stored pages.”

“Few authors have written more eloquently of freedom, or paid truer and nobler homage to its advocates and martyrs ; and few have opened hotter vials of wrath upon bigotry, tyranny, and all forms of legislative fraud.”—*Whipple*.

**Historical Writing in the Nineteenth Century.**—The Victorian Age has seen an extraordinary development in two departments of prose writing : in fiction and in history. Historians have adopted new and more scholarly methods in the preparation of their material. Relying largely on the testimony of contemporary witnesses, they spare themselves no labor in deciphering old letters, memoirs, and other private papers, and they are indefatigable in their study of the innumerable public documents recently opened to scholars. The historian of the nineteenth century possesses also rare skill in the handling of his material. He has the imagination that enables him to think and feel as men thought and felt centuries ago. He is thus able to reproduce the past ; while with his critical insight he traces the relations of events, and pronounces a wise judgment upon men and things. To his scholarship and historical sense, he adds the charm of a well-developed prose style ; till, at the present day, the most absorbing

narratives, the most finished studies of character, the most brilliant and picturesque descriptions, are to be found in the pages of the historian. Carlyle's *History of the French Revolution* is a work remarkable for its scholarship, imagination, and style. Hallam's *Middle Ages*, Milman's *Latin Christianity*, and Grote's *History of Greece*, are among the ablest of modern works. Many eminent historians of our century are still living, and therefore do not come within the scope of this text-book. Of those who are gone, the most versatile and popular, and the one most inviting to the young reader, is Thomas Babington Macaulay.

**Life of Macaulay.**—He was born in England, but was of Scotch descent. His father, Zachary Macaulay, was a philanthropist, who spent his life in laboring for the abolition of slavery in the English Colonies. Like his son, he was a man of vast information and remarkable memory. When his friend Wilberforce was at a loss for a fact, he used to say, "Let us look it out in Macaulay!"

Macaulay's boyhood was, perhaps, the period of his greatest literary activity. Said Miss Hannah More, the little boy's friend and confidante, "The quantity of reading Tom has poured in, and the quantity of writing he has poured out, is astonishing." He wrote a compendium of universal history; a paper intended to persuade the heathen to embrace the Christian religion; and a poem in six cantos, called *The Battle of Cheviot*—the result of his boyish enthusiasm for Scott. He was hardly more than eight when he composed an epic poem.

Macaulay's school-days were passed at an excellent private school near Cambridge, and his education was continued at the university. It was in these years that he was laying the foundations of his vast learning. "The secret of his immense acquirements," says his biographer, Trevel-

yan, "lay in two invaluable gifts of nature : an unerring memory, and the capacity for taking in at a glance the contents of a printed page."

Macaulay, like many other men of letters, began life as a lawyer ; but he soon found that literature was the pursuit in which he was happiest. At the age of twenty-five, he published his essay on Milton, and, like Byron, "awoke one morning and found himself famous." The essay was published in *The Edinburgh Review*, and marked the beginning of Macaulay's connection with that periodical. He remained for twenty years its most brilliant contributor ; in its pages first appeared nearly all those papers now known as Macaulay's Essays. After the first burst of admiration for the essay on Milton, a cooler judgment found much in it to criticise. It is but justice to Macaulay, however, to remember that he was only twenty-five when he wrote it, and that years after, he declared that it hardly contained a paragraph which his matured judgment approved.

This single magazine article made Macaulay a literary lion. He was for many years a brilliant figure in London society. "Macaulay is the king of diners-out," writes Emerson. "I do not know when I have seen such wonderful vivacity. He has the strength of ten men, immense memory, fun, fire, learning, politics, manners, and pride, and talks all the time in a steady torrent."

"Macaulay improves, Macaulay improves !" cried Sydney Smith. "I have observed in him of late flashes of—*silence!*"

At the age of thirty, Macaulay entered Parliament. The gift that gave him influence in the House of Commons was closely akin to his gift as a writer : his speeches were like his essays, vigorous, emphatic, full of the same splendor of illustration and intensity of feeling. Macaulay's life for several years was made up of Parliamentary debates, frequent contributions to *The Edinburgh Review*, and a suc-

cession of dinner-parties. In 1834, he became a member of the Supreme Council of India. In the four years of his residence in India he did little literary work. He had regarded literature as a relaxation, never as a means of support. "The thought of becoming a bookseller's hack," he says, "of writing to relieve, not the fullness of the mind, but the emptiness of the pocket; of filling sheets with trash merely that the sheets may be filled,—is horrible to me. Yet thus it must be, if I quit office." He returned from India in 1838, filled with a strong purpose: "to write the history of England from the accession of King James II. down to a time within the memory of men still living." It was a loss to literature that Macaulay was immediately forced back into politics. When he died, at the age of fifty-nine, his great work had not been completed,—was, indeed, but a fragment of the history that Macaulay intended to write.

**Macaulay's Poetry.**—Macaulay had great facility in the use of rhyme and rhythm. His ballads are smooth, spirited, and stirring. Macaulay says frankly that he imitates Scott, "the great restorer of our ballad poetry"; but the *Lays of Ancient Rome* are far below Scott in picturesqueness and true poetic interest. *The Battle of Lake Regillus* and *Horatius* produce a fine effect on the ear, but beyond that, yield little satisfaction to the mature reader.

**Macaulay's Essays** cover a wide range of topics; but the larger number, and the most important, relate to English history or to English literature. Subjects like *Lord Bacon*, *Warren Hastings*, *Addison*, are not inviting to the mass of readers, till, touched with Macaulay's pen, they become fascinating and delightful.

"The traveler in Australia, visiting one settler's hut after another, finds again and again that the settler's third book, after the Bible and Shakespeare, is some work by Macaulay. Nothing can be more

natural. The Bible and Shakespeare may be said to be imposed upon an Englishman as objects of his admiration ; but as soon as the common Englishman, desiring culture, begins to choose for himself, he chooses Macaulay."

These words of Matthew Arnold indicate the peculiar value of Macaulay to the English-speaking race. His mission is to those just entering upon the intellectual life. He invites to knowledge ; he tempts to learning. He proves to the young that the things of the mind are not dry and dull, but rich and alluring. Information that would otherwise have reached the reader in some laborious, circuitous fashion, comes through Macaulay straight to the comprehension. Knowledge thus filtered grows at once clear and practical. He took learning out of musty books and away from pedantic instructors, and transformed it into the popular reading of the day. "He popularized learning," some one says sneeringly ; but the writer who brings intellectual life to the sheep ranch of Australia or Texas, is worthy of more gratitude than contempt.

The most serious charge against Macaulay is that he sacrificed truth in making his statements always striking and attractive, and in indulging his strong personal prejudices. Every thoughtful reader must acknowledge that this is in a degree true. Macaulay loved a short, emphatic statement, without doubt or qualification. Lord Melbourne used to say that he wished he were as sure of anything as Tom Macaulay was of everything. There is in his writing a manly, vigorous quality that does at times become loud-voiced and overbearing. "Macaulay is rough," says Taine ; "when he strikes, he knocks down." But after making all allowances for the strength of his prejudices and for his over-emphatic rhetoric, there remains enough of reliable matter in Macaulay to send us to his writings for vast and varied instruction. His very excess of force is that which arrests the attention of the inexperienced reader, and rouses



his interest in a hitherto unattractive subject. Macaulay is simple, concrete, and picturesque, never too high or too deep for the average reader. He had that power of selection that seizes at a glance upon what is striking; and he possessed the further gift of making a subject tenfold more striking by the language in which he clothed it. (P. 382.)

**History of England.**—The first two volumes of Macaulay's history appeared in 1848; and since Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, no historical work had been received with such excitement. In less than four months, thirteen thousand copies had been sold. In the United States it had a popularity like that of the novels of Dickens. Macaulay wrote in 1841, "I shall not be satisfied unless I produce something which shall for a few days supersede the last fashionable novel on the tables of young ladies." Trevelyan adds, "The annual sale of the 'history' has frequently since 1857 surpassed the sale of the fashionable novel of the current year." Macaulay's *History of England* is a thoroughly interesting work. It is prejudiced, dogmatic, diffuse, and unphilosophical, say the critics. The readers, on the other hand, persist in finding it the most attractive history of England thus far written. It has all the charm and all the faults of the essays.

**Style.**—Macaulay's famous *style* has been well described by Dean Milman :—

"Its characteristics were vigor and animation, copiousness, clearness; above all, sound English, now a rare excellence. The vigor and life were unabating; perhaps in that conscious strength which cost no exertion, he did not always gauge and measure the force of his own words. . . . His copiousness had nothing tumid, diffuse, Asiatic; no ornament for the sake of ornament. As to its clearness, one may read a sentence of Macaulay twice to judge of its full force, never to comprehend its meaning. His English was pure, both in idiom and in words, pure to fastidiousness; . . . every word must

be genuine English, nothing that approached real vulgarity, nothing that had not the stamp of popular use, or the authority of sound English writers, nothing unfamiliar to the common ear."

If rhetoric is the art of effective expression, then Macaulay is our greatest rhetorician. His style is intensely practical. His effort is to fix a thought in the mind of a reader with the same force with which it leaves his own, and every artifice of rhetoric is made use of to produce this result. His mannerisms are nearly all tricks of oratory; short sentences, omission of connectives, enumeration of details in a series, and constant use of antithesis.

Trevelyan describes the care with which Macaulay wrote :—

"The main secret of Macaulay's success lay in this, that to extraordinary fluency and facility he united patient, minute, and persistent diligence. He well knew, as Chaucer knew before him, that

‘There is no workman  
That can bothe worken wel and hastilie. . .  
This must be done at leisure parfaitlie.’

"If his method of composition ever comes into fashion, books probably will be better, and undoubtedly will be shorter. . . . Macaulay never allowed a sentence to pass muster until it was as good as he could make it. He thought little of recasting a whole chapter in order to obtain a more lucid arrangement, and nothing whatever of reconstructing a paragraph for the sake of one happy stroke or apt illustration. . . . Macaulay deserved the compliment which Cecil paid to Sir Walter Raleigh as the supreme of commendations : ‘I know that he can labor terribly.’"

**Suggestions for Reading.**—*Essay on Mme. D'Arblay*, and *Essay on Warren Hastings*;—Whipple's *Essay on Macaulay*.

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**In this chapter we have considered :—**

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Historical Writing in the Nineteenth Century.</i></li> <li>2. <i>The Life of Macaulay.</i></li> <li>3. <i>Poetry.</i></li> <li>4. <i>Essays.</i></li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. <i>History of England.</i></li> <li>6. <i>Style.</i></li> </ol> |
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## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE NOVELISTS.

**Minor Novelists.**—The novel of real life, as Fielding wrote it, gave way, before many years, to the romance; till, at the close of the last century, the most popular writer of fiction in England was (1.) Mrs. Ann Radcliffe. Her books were filled with improbable incidents and impossible people, and were written in a high-flown and sentimental style. *The Romance of the Forest* and the *Mysteries of Udolpho* were the fashionable novels of their day. They, moreover, inspired a crowd of imitators, whose names and whose books have now passed quite out of sight. (2.) It was in protest against these high-flown romances that Jane Austen wrote her first novel,—*Northanger Abbey*. She was a humorist and a literary artist of a high order. Her novels keep strictly within the bounds of possibility and common sense; but, under her delicate touch, familiar incidents and conventional people become original and delightful. *Pride and Prejudice*, *Emma*, and *Mansfield Park* are her best works. (3.) Of Maria Edgeworth, too, it was said that her novels were “a sort of essence of common sense.” Her stories of Irish life were full of vivacity, humor, and pathos. *Castle Rackrent* is one of the best. Scott used to say that Miss Edgeworth’s Irish tales had first inspired him to write his Scottish romances. Both Miss Austen and Miss Edgeworth had a warm admirer in the generous Sir Walter. He never tired of praising Jane Austen’s exquisite skill in making commonplace things interesting. He was himself a far greater force in fiction than any writer who had preceded him. He made En-

gland a nation of novel-readers. He created a new outlet for literary energy, and inspired young writers with a new ambition. The novel has reached an extraordinary development since his day. Much tolerably good fiction has been written, much more that is intolerably poor; while a few novels have risen to the highest ranks of literature.

(4.) Among the novelists whose fame promises to be lasting, is Charlotte Brontë, the author of *Jane Eyre*, *Shirley*, and *Villette*. She was a writer of singular power and originality. She searched the human heart for its deepest experiences, and depicted with marvelous intensity its joys and sufferings. Her style was strong, abrupt, often crude, but impassioned and poetical. (5.) Charles Reade's novels are marked by fiery energy, both of style and purpose. They are read for their breathless succession of incidents and dramatic scenes rather than for their rounded studies of character. In his earnest desire to be useful to his public, Charles Reade made each of his novels attack some abuse of the times,—the prison system, the mismanagement of hospitals, or the tyranny of trades unions. His masterpiece is *The Cloister and the Hearth*. With all his dramatic gifts and his skill as a narrator, Charles Reade often offends the taste by coarseness of style and feeling. (6.) Anthony Trollope's novels are not the product of creative genius, but rather of keen, humorous observation, thorough knowledge of the world, genial, kindly sympathies, and the unerring instincts of a gentleman. English fiction offers no more delicate entertainment than may be found in the so-called "clerical novels" of Anthony Trollope, beginning with *The Warden*, and ending with *The Last Chronicle of Barset*. (7.) Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton won a highly respectable position as novelist and dramatist. *Richelieu* and *The Lady of Lyons* are well known on the stage; *The Last Days of Pompeii*, *Rienzi*, and *The Caxtons* are standard novels.

The three names most significant in the history of nineteenth century fiction are Dickens, Thackeray, and George Eliot.

**Charles Dickens** was the most popular novelist of his day. He was born in 1812. His father's ill-luck brought him to the debtors' prison, and the little boy at nine years of age was cast on his own resources. Much of the bitter experience of those early days found its way into his autobiographical novel, *David Copperfield*. The story of David in Murdstone and Grinby's warehouse was the history of the sad and care-worn little boy, Charles Dickens, employed from one long week to another in pasting labels upon blacking bottles. Of schooling he had next to none. When he was fourteen, he became a lawyer's office-boy, and here again the sharp-eyed, sharp-witted little fellow was laying up a store of material that came to good use later. The turning-point in his life was his decision to become a short-hand reporter. From taking down the words of other men, he soon came to write short pieces of his own. The *Sketches by Boz* attracted so much attention that they were gathered from the paper in which they had appeared and were republished in book form. The author, moreover, was invited to relate, in comic vein, the adventures of a club of sportsmen. The aid of a comic illustrator was enlisted to increase the fun. Such was the origin of *The Pickwick Papers*. With this book, Dickens' fame and fortune were made. He was now twenty-four; he lived to be fifty-eight, and the years between are a record of literary prosperity such as falls to the lot of few writers. One success followed another: *Oliver Twist*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Old Curiosity Shop*, and *Barnaby Rudge*. Meanwhile, he had become as popular in America as in England, and when he visited this country in 1842, he was welcomed with enthusiastic hospitality. Many people thought *American*



*Notes* and *Martin Chuzzlewit* a poor return for their cordial reception; but Dickens' exaggeration of American peculiarities is, on the whole, no greater than the extravagance of his English characters. He was a keen observer of superficial manners and customs rather than of the spirit and principles of the American people. After his visit to this country, he spent a year in Italy, and then, returning to London, he entered upon the busiest years of his active life. His literary career culminated in 1850, with the appearance of *David Copperfield*, the book that he himself as well as his public loved best among all his novels. "It will be easily believed," he said, "that I am a fond parent to every child of my fancy. But, like many fond parents, I have in my heart of hearts a favorite child—and his name is David Copperfield!" Dickens wrote nothing that gave more pleasure or did more good than his *Christmas Stories*. *A Christmas Carol*, *The Cricket on the Hearth*, and *The Chimes* will outlive many of his longer works.

In 1850 Dickens took charge of a weekly paper, called *Household Words*, and gained for it a large circulation. Afterwards he started his own *All the Year Round*, and contributed to it his later novels, in serial form.

His public readings from his own works were, rather than his writings, the success of his last years. Dickens, with his vigorous constitution and splendid vitality, should have lived to a good old age. He broke down under long-continued overwork, and died suddenly at his home at Gad's Hill, in 1870.

To the mass of novel-readers, the name of Dickens is dearer than that of any other novelist. They love and bless him for his sympathy with the joys and sorrows of humble life, for his tenderness toward the old, the poor, the sick, and the discouraged. His sense of the pathetic is matched by his sense of the humorous; and this, again,

makes him a popular writer. Dickens never did anything by halves,—as he himself said,—and he was never pathetic or humorous by halves. In the judgment of the critical reader, his pathos too often descends to sentimentality, and his humor to farcical caricature. It is, however, Dickens' treatment of character to which such a reader must object most earnestly. His observation of peculiarities was marvelously keen; but the result in his novels is not so much studies of *character* as studies of *characteristics*. That his men and women have some truth to nature cannot be denied, but they are faithful only to what is grotesque and unusual. Dickens, like Ben Jonson, depicted "Every Man in his Humor."

The moral purpose of Dickens did much to win him respect and affection. He was a good citizen, and had an honest desire to better the social condition of his country. His attacks on school, prison, and work-house abuses, and his exposure of the maladministration of justice,—all made his pen a powerful instrument of reform. His more general moral purpose was the teaching of kindness and cheerfulness—his "carol philosophy," he called it.

Dickens' hold upon readers is through his humor, his pathos, and the gentle and humane teachings of his books, rather than through his knowledge or portrayal of human nature. He is gradually taking his place among the great humorists rather than among the great novelists of the English literature.

**William Makepeace Thackeray** was eminent both as humorist and as novelist. He was born in 1811, in Calcutta, where his father and grandfather had been employed in the civil service. He was brought to England when a child, and sent to the Charter-house School, and afterward to Cambridge. The young man inherited a snug little fortune, and, had he been reasonably thrifty, might never

have been driven to write for his bread and butter. His youthful follies helped him afterward to be very tolerant of young scapegraces, and to deal gently with Clive Newcome, Pendennis, and Philip. His desire was to become an artist, and he spent several years on the Continent with that end in view; but when the need of money came, it was clear that some other means of earning it must be adopted. Not very hopefully, Thackeray took up his pen. He became a regular contributor to *Fraser's Magazine*, but not a petted and pampered one. While Dickens could command any publisher and any price, Thackeray's articles were rejected or cut down. In 1841 *Punch* was established, and to this he contributed the *Snob Papers*, *James's Diary*, and other writings in prose and verse.

(1.) Thackeray's literary position was at last fixed by the appearance of *Vanity Fair*, in 1846. The novel was a profound satire upon English society. Before the last numbers had appeared, Charlotte Brontë, a total stranger to Thackeray, had dedicated to him the second edition of *Jane Eyre*. She writes in her preface:—

“There is a man in our own days whose words are not framed to tickle delicate ears; who, to my thinking, comes before the great ones of society, much as the son of Imlah came before the throned kings of Judah and Israel; and who speaks truth as deep, with a power as prophet-like and as vital—a mien as dauntless and as daring. . . . Why have I alluded to this man? I have alluded to him, Reader, because I think I see in him an intellect profounder and more unique than his contemporaries have yet recognized; because I regard him as the first social regenerator of the day.”

(2.) *Pendennis* is the record of a literary life, and in many of its details reflects the author's own experience.

(3.) *Henry Esmond* is the most finished and artistic of the novels of Thackeray. His knowledge of the age of Queen Anne was almost as intimate and familiar as his acquaintance with the England of his own day. The writers of

that age were his favorite study and model. It had long been his desire to write a history of the time ; but he perhaps turned his stores of knowledge to better account when he wrote the novel of *Esmond*. It is a marvelous resurrection of a past age, reproducing even in its language the England of Addison.

(4.) The most beloved of Thackeray's novels is probably *The Newcomes* ; certainly no other character that he has created holds such a place in our hearts as Colonel Newcome. Thackeray gave as lectures in England and in America the delightful papers on *The Four Georges* and *The English Humorists*.

Thackeray's novels have little plot. There is usually a hero whose adventures from infancy to middle age are chronicled in the old-fashioned, leisurely method of the eighteenth century novelists. In a work like *Vanity Fair* interest centres almost wholly in character. Becky Sharpe does not need to be wound up in the intricacies of an involved plot in order to become interesting. It is her character more than her adventures that piques our curiosity and holds us in suspense. In the creation of character Thackeray's art is perfect. It would be foolish to deny that he shows us the dark side of life. His hope of making the world better is by warning it of evil rather than by holding up examples of good. He does not, like Dickens, exhort to cheerfulness ; but insists on sincerity, honor, and generosity.

Thackeray's style has as its basis a most friendly and confidential relation with his reader. This leads him into frequent digressions and inartistic chatting about his characters ; but produces, on the other hand, a genial, free-and-easy, altogether delightful flow of racy, idiomatic English.

The personal character of Thackeray was long misjudged by careless readers of his books ; he was slow in winning

that personal affection that from the first was lavished upon Dickens. Within recent years, Thackeray and his readers have been drawing closer together. They have learned to know the generous and high-souled, tender and pitiful nature of the man. "He wrote with a sigh rather than with a sneer," his public now believe. He never made a hero more generous than he was himself; he never created a woman that had a tenderer heart,—this fierce satirist and grim misanthrope, as men thought him once.

Dickens and Thackeray were in many points followers of the eighteenth century novelists. The novelist who belonged wholly to her own time, who was a most characteristic product of the nineteenth century, and who most strongly influenced her age, was George Eliot.

**George Eliot** (Mary Ann Evans Cross) was for many years "the most famous and the most unknown" woman of her time. When, after her death, the story of her life was given to the public, it was eagerly scanned for a more intimate and personal knowledge of the woman whom the world had long loved as the author. Mary Ann Evans was born in Warwickshire in 1819. She spent her childhood in the country, among the scenes and people that furnished her with her first and, in many respects, her best literary material. She was a quaint, old-fashioned little girl, diffident and reserved with her companions. As a school-girl, she was chiefly famous for the compositions that she wrote and for her skill in music. The death of her mother and the marriage of her sister, left her at seventeen the head of her father's house. She was a proficient housewife, and a devoted daughter. Meanwhile, in the stillness and freedom of her country home, she was beginning to lead an active intellectual life. Her eager mind reached out after knowledge in every direction. Her life was at this time also remarkable for its overstrained piety. She thought



“Shakespeare dangerous,” “music unholy”; and at the age of twenty, wrote of novels, “The weapons of Christian warfare were never sharpened at the forge of romance.” In 1841, her father removed to Coventry, and his daughter at once found her place there in a little circle of singularly gifted and cultivated people. She continued her studies under a fresh inspiration. Her new friends turned her thoughts into different channels, and especially they influenced her religious convictions. By nature she was earnest and devout; but she was now led to doubt and question the religious opinions that she had inherited. We have only to read her books, however, to feel her reverence for sincere beliefs of every shade.

The first literary work of Miss Evans was an able translation of Strauss’s *Life of Jesus*. She became known as a young woman of astonishing gifts, and the editor of the *Westminster Review* had such confidence in her ability that he invited her to come up to London to assist him in his editorial work. She was now able to measure herself with the best minds of her age. Herbert Spencer became her intimate friend, and he introduced to her his friend, George Henry Lewes. It was in 1854 that she entered upon her union with Mr. Lewes.\* Mr. Lewes brought to light George Eliot the novelist. She had not written a page of fiction, up to the age of thirty-seven. In *Blackwood’s Magazine*, in 1857, appeared her first attempt, *The Sad Fortunes of the Reverend Amos Barton*. This was the first of the *Scenes from Clerical Life*, and was followed by *Mr. Gilfil’s Love Story* and *Janet’s Repentance*, all written over the pseudonym George Eliot. The remainder of her life was eventful chiefly through the writing and reception of her books. The three novels that followed, *Adam Bede*, *The Mill on the Floss*, and *Silas Marner*, are her most pop-

\* Mr. Lewes, although separated from his first wife upon just and sufficient grounds, could not, according to English law, be divorced from her.

ular works. *Romola* is a scholarly study of Florentine life in the fifteenth century, and at the same time a profound study of character. *Felix Holt, the Radical*, is the least attractive of her novels. *Middlemarch* and *Daniel Deronda* were the two works with which her career ended.

In 1878 the death of Mr. Lewes filled all hearts with sympathy for George Eliot. Two years later, she was married to John Walter Cross, a London banker many years her junior. She lived but six months after her marriage.

George Eliot regarded a novel as a study of human experience, amusing, saddening, inspiring, profoundly instructive as life itself. Such experience might, or it might not, make a complicated story. Most men's lives did not form an involved plot; most men were neither saints nor sinners, fools nor geniuses. Her own words best express her creed as novelist:—

“There are few prophets in the world; few sublimely beautiful women; few heroes. I can't afford to give all my love and reverence to such rarities; I want a great deal of those feelings for my everyday fellow-men, especially for the few in the foreground of the great multitude, whose faces I know, whose hands I touch, for whom I have to make way with kindly courtesy. . . . It is more needful that my heart should swell with loving admiration at some trait of gentle goodness in the faulty people who sit at the same hearth with me, than at the deeds of heroes whom I shall never know except by hearsay.”

But it must be remembered that George Eliot saw these commonplace people, like Amos Barton or Mr. Tulliver, with her matchless sympathy and insight, and that her art removes them from the commonplace. Writers without her genius have adopted her creed, and the result is to be seen in many of the weary novels of our day.

George Eliot's method of presenting a character is analytic rather than dramatic. She studies her characters scientifically, and gives the reader the scholarly results of

her investigations ; she does not, like the dramatist, allow them to reveal themselves. Her report of the inner life of a man or woman is masterly in its knowledge of the human heart, in its truth and completeness. She has, like Shakespeare, humor and pathos in close union. Her humor is rich and mellow, and her pathos deep and tender. Her style, like her thought, is full of beauty and nourishment ; and, like her thought, it is at times heavy and labored.

An earnest moral purpose has influenced the novelists of our time, and in no one has it been felt more strongly than in George Eliot. *Live and teach*, she said, should be a proverb as well as *Live and learn*. What she herself taught best was an exalted sense of duty to our fellow-men ;—above all, the duty of “pity and fairness, two little words, which, carried out, would embrace the utmost delicacies of the moral life.” Self-sacrifice, sympathy, and helpfulness are the lessons of her books.

“Give me no light, great heaven, but such as turns  
To energy of human fellowship.”

She draws men together in a closer brotherhood, binding high and low, rich and poor, with the sense of common joys, and still oftener, of common sorrows and temptations. For George Eliot’s world is, on the whole, a sad one. She acknowledges herself baffled by the sin and suffering that she sees and cannot account for. She is reduced to doubt and unbelief. This alone we are sure of, according to her teaching :—“that by desiring what is perfectly good, even when we do not quite know what it is, and cannot do what we would, we are part of the divine power against evil—widening the skirts of light and making the struggle with darkness narrower.”

Since Chaucer wrote, five hundred years ago, English literature has grown to maturity. It has lost its youthful

freshness and spontaneity ; it is older, wiser, and sadder. Chaucer, joyous, hearty, naïf, may well stand for the youth of our literature. George Eliot's philosophic mind, scientific methods, carefully elaborated expression, her complete self-knowledge, her doubt and sadness, and, above all, her passionate "energy of human fellowship," make her the typical English writer of the age in which we live.

**Suggestions for Reading.**—Dickens' *Christmas Carol* ;—Thackeray's *The Newcomes* ;—George Eliot's *Silas Marner*.

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**In this chapter we have considered:—**

- 1. *Minor Novelists.***
- 2. *Charles Dickens.***
- 3. *William Makepeace Thackeray.***
- 4. *George Eliot.***





## SELECTIONS.

NOTE.—It is advised that the class in English Literature should meet five times a week during one school year. One lesson in each week may be devoted to English Composition, the topics for written exercises being drawn from the subjects under discussion in the class. One lesson should be devoted to reading aloud from the authors studied. No pupil's work should be regarded as satisfactory until he can express in writing facts and impressions derived from his study, and until he can read aloud with intelligent appreciation passages from the works of each author. For the latter purpose, the following selections are recommended.

### CHAUCE R.

In the portrait of the Clerk of Oxenford, notice the compression of the description, and, at the same time, its minute and truthful detail. See Chaucer's humorous, but delicate and sympathetic appreciation of the character. What historical interest has this portrait?

A CLERK ther was of Oxenford also,  
That unto logik hadde longe i-go.  
As lene was his hors as is a rake,  
And he was not right fat, I undertake;  
But lokede holwe, and therto soberly.  
Ful thredbare was his overeste courtepy,  
For he hadde geten him yit no benefice,  
Ne was so worldly for to have office.  
For him was levere have at his beddes heede  
Twenty bookes, clad in blak or reede,  
Of Aristotle and his philosophie,  
Then robes riche, or fithele, or gay sawtrie.  
But al be that he was a philosophre,  
Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre;

But al that he mighte of his freundes hente,  
 On bookes and on lernyng he it spente,  
 And busily gan for the soules preye  
 Of hem that yaf him wherwith to scoleye,  
 Of studie took he most cure and most heede.  
 Not oo word spak he more than was neede,  
 And that was seid in forme and reverence  
 And schort and quyk, and ful of high sentence.  
 Sownynge in moral vertu was his speche,  
 And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche.

“Heere folweth the Prologe of the clerkes tale of Oxenford.” The minor prologues that introduce the separate tales show us the Canterbury pilgrims as they ride along together, and joke and laugh and rally one another. The jovial host is the life of the party. He had stirred up Chaucer himself, who rode silent with eyes on the ground; and now he turns upon the quiet and thoughtful Clerk of Oxenford, and good-naturedly orders him to tell “som merie tale.” The tale is “Patient Griselda”:

‘Sir clerk of Oxenford,’ our hoste sayde,  
 ‘Ye ryde as coy and stille as dooth a mayde,  
 Were newe spoused, sitting at the bord;  
 This day ne herde I of your tonge a word.  
 I trowe ye studie aboute som sophyme,  
 But Salomon seith, “euery thyng hath tyme.”

For goddes sake, as beth of bettre chere,  
 It is no tyme for to studien here.  
 Telle vs som merie tale, by your fey;  
 For what man that is entred in a pley,  
 He nedes moot vnto the pley assente.  
 But precheth nat, as freres doon in lente,  
 To make vs for our olde synnes wepe,  
 Ne that thy tale make vs nat to slepe.

Telle vs som merie thing of auentures;—  
 Your termes, your colours, and your figures,  
 Keepe hem in stoor til so be ye endyte  
 Hy style, as whan that men to kinges wryte.

Speketh so pleyn at this tyme, I yow preye,  
That we may vnderstonde what ye seye.'

This worthy clerk benignely answerde,  
'Hoste,' quod he, 'I am vnder your yerde;  
Ye han of vs as now the gouernaunce,  
And therfor wol I do yow obeisaunce,  
As fer as reson axeth, hardily.  
I wol yow telle a tale which that I  
Lerned at Padowe of a worthy clerk,  
As preued by his wordes and his werk.  
He is now deed and nailed in his cheste,  
I prey to god so yiue his soule reste!'

The story begins by telling of a certain Marquis, the lord of a noble domain "at the west side of Itaille." He ruled his people so well that they declared :

We

Ne coude not vs self deuysen how  
We myghte liuen in more felicitee,  
Saue o thing, lord, if it your wille be,  
That for to been a wedded man yow leste,  
Than were your peple in souereyn hertes reste.

With considerable reluctance, the Marquis consents to marry, but only on condition that he shall be permitted to choose his bride for himself :

Lat me alone in chesing of my wyf,  
That charge vpon my bak I wol endure;  
But I yow preye, and charge upon your lyf,  
That what wyf that I take, ye me assure  
To worshipe hir, whyl that hir lyf may dure,  
In word and werk, bothe here and euerywhere,  
As she an emperoures doughter were.

The following stanzas tell how the Marquis chose his wife. The passage illustrates Chaucer's gently-flowing narrative, never in haste yet never flagging in interest.

The simplicity of the style is partly to be traced to the directness and sincerity of the writer, partly to a youthful and artless age, when people expressed themselves much less subtly than they do at present. Notice the sweet and tender description of the young maiden Griselda and her humble life.

Noght fer fro thilke paleys honorable  
Ther as this markis shoop his mariage,  
Ther stood a throp, of site delytable,  
In which that poure folk of that village  
Hadden her bestes and her herbergage,  
And of her labour tooke her sustenance  
After that the erthe yaf hem habundance.

Amonges this poure folk ther dwelte a man  
Which that was holden pourest of hem alle;  
But hye god som tyme senden can  
His grace in-to a litel oxes stalle:  
Ianicula men of that throphe him calle.  
A doughter hadde he fair ynough to syghte,  
And Grisildis this yonge mayden hyghte.

But for to speke of vertuous beautee,  
Than was she oon the faireste vnder sonne;  
For poureliche yfostred vp was she,  
No [sinful] lust was thurgh hir herte yronne;  
Wel offer of the welle than of the tonne  
She drank, and for she wolde vertu plese,  
She knew wel labour, but noon ydel ese.

But though this mayde tendre were of age,  
Yet in the brest of hir virginitee  
Ther was enclosed rype and sad corage;  
And in greet reuerence and charitee  
Hir olde poure fader fostred she;  
A fewe sheep spinning on feeld she kepte,  
She wolde nought been ydel til she slepte.

And whan she homward cam, she wolde bringe  
 Wortes or othere herbes tymes ofte,  
 The whiche she shredde and seeth for hir liuinge,  
 And made hir bed ful harde and no thing softe;  
 And ay she kepte hir fadres lyf on-lofte  
 With euerich obeisaunce and diligence  
 That child may doon to fadres reuerence.

Vp-on Grisild this poure creature  
 Ful ofte sythe this markis sette his yē  
 As he on hunting rood paraenture;  
 And whan it fil that he myghte hir espye,  
 He nought with wantoun lokyng of folye  
 His yēn caste on hir, but in sad wyse  
 Vp-on hir chere hē wolde him ofte auyse,

Commending in his herte hir wommanhede,  
 And eek hir vertu, passing any wyght  
 Of so yong age, as wel in chere as dede.  
 For though the peple haue no greet insyght  
 In vertu, he considered ful ryght  
 Hir bountee, and disposed that he wolde  
 Wedde hir oonly, if euer he wedde sholde.

The day of wedding cam, but no wyght can  
 Telle what womman that it sholde be;  
 For which merueille wondred many a man,  
 And seyden, whan they were in priuete, 'Wol nat our lord yet leue his vanitee?  
 Wol he nat wedde? alas, alas the whyle!  
 Why wol he thus him-self and vs bigyle?

But natheles this markis hath doon make  
 Of gemmes, set in gold and in asure,  
 Broches and ringes, for Grisildis sake,  
 And of hir clothing took he the mesure  
 By a mayde, lyk to hir stature,  
 And eek of othere ornamentes alle  
 That vn-to swich a wedding sholde falle.



The tyme of vndern of the same day  
 Approcheth, that this wedding sholde be;  
 And al the paleys put was in array,  
 Bothe halle and chambres, ech in his degree;  
 Houses of office stuffed with plentee  
 Ther maystow seen of deynteuous vitaille,  
 That may be founde, as fer as last Itaille.

This roial markis richely arrayed,  
 Lordes and ladyes in his companye,  
 The whiche vnto the feste were yprayed,  
 And of his retenue the bachelrye,  
 With many a soun of sondry melodye,  
 Vn-to the village, of the which I tolde,  
 In this array the ryghte wey han holde.

Grisilde of this, god wot, ful innocent,  
 That for hir shapen was al this array,  
 To fecchen water at a well is went,  
 And cometh hoom as soone as euer she may.  
 For wel she had herd seyde, that thilke day  
 The markis sholde wedde, and, if she myghte,  
 She wolde fayn han seyn som of that syghte.

She thoughte, 'I wol with othere maydens stonde,  
 That been my felawes, in our dore, and se  
 The markisesse, and therfor wol I fonde  
 To doon at hoom, as soone as it may be,  
 The labour which that longeth vn-to me;  
 And than I may at leyser hir biholde,  
 If she this wey vn-to the castel holde.'

And as she wolde ouer hir threshfold goon,  
 The markis cam and gan hir for to calle;  
 And she sette down hir water-pot anoon  
 Bisyde the threshfold, in an oxes stalle,  
 And down vp-on hir knees she gan to falle,  
 And with sad contenance kneleth stille  
 Til she had herd what was the lordes wille.

This thoughtful markis spak vn-to this mayde  
 Ful sobrelly, and seyde in this manere,  
 'Wher is your fader, Grisildis?' he sayde,  
 And she with reuerence, in humble chere,  
 Answerde, 'lord, he is al redy here.'  
 And in she gooth with-outen lenger lette,  
 And to the markis she hir fader fette.

He by the hond than took this olde man,  
 And seyde thus, whan he him hadde asyde,  
 'Ianicula, I neither may ne can  
 Lenger the plesance of myn herte hyde.  
 If that thou vouche sauf, what so bityde,  
 Thy doughter wol I take er that I wende  
 As for my wyf, vn-to hir lyues ende.

Thou louest me, I wot it wel certeyn,  
 And art my feithful lige man ybore;  
 And al that lyketh me, I dar wel seyn,  
 It lyketh thee, and specially therfore  
 Tel me that poynt that I haue seyde bifore,  
 If that thou wolt vn-to that purpos drawe  
 To take me as for thy sone in lawe?'

This sodeyn cas this man astonied so,  
 That reed he wex, abayst, and al quaking  
 He stood; vnnethes seyde he wordes mo,  
 But only thus: 'lord,' quod he, 'my willing  
 Is as ye wole, ne ayeins youre lyking  
 I wol no-thing; ye be my lord so dere;  
 Ryght as yow lust gouerneth this matere.'

'Yet wol I,' quod this markis softly,  
 'That in thy chambre I and thou and she  
 Haue a collacion, and wostow why?  
 For I wol axe if it hir wille be  
 To be my wyf, and reule hir after me;  
 And al this shal be doon in thy presence,  
 I wol nought speke out of thyn audience.'

And in the chambre whyl they were aboute  
 Her tretys, which as ye shal after here,  
 The peple cam vn-to the hous with-oute,  
 And wondred hem in how honest manere  
 And tentifly she kepte hir fader dere.  
 But outerly Grisildis wondre myghte,  
 For neuer erst ne sey she swich a syghte.

No wonder is though that she were astoned  
 To seen so greet a gest come in that place;  
 She neuer was to swiche gestes woned,  
 For which she looked with ful pale face.  
 But shortly forth this tale for to chace,  
 Thise arn the wordes that the markis sayde  
 To this benigne verray feithful mayde.

‘Grisilde,’ he seyde, ‘ye shul wel vnderstonde  
 It lyketh to your fader and to me  
 That I yow wedde, and eek it may so stonde,  
 As I suppose, ye wol that it so be.  
 But thise demandes axe I first,’ quod he,  
 ‘That, sith it shal be doon in hastif wyse,  
 Wol ye assente or elles yow auyse?’

I seye this, be ye redy with good herte  
 To al my lust, and that I frely may,  
 As me best thinketh, do yow laughe or smerte,  
 And neuer ye to grucche it, nyght ne day?  
 And eek whan I sey ‘ye,’ ne sey nat ‘nay,’  
 Neither by word ne frowning contenance;  
 Swer this, and here I swere our alliance.’

Wondring vp-on this word, quaking for drede,  
 She seyde, ‘lord, vndigne and vnworthy  
 Am I to thilke honour that ye me bede;  
 But as ye wol your-self, ryght so wol I.  
 And heer I swere that neuer willingly  
 In werk ne thought I nil yow disobeye,  
 For to be deed, though me were loth to deye.’

‘This is ynough, Grisilde myn!’ quod he.  
 And forth he goth with a ful sobre chere  
 Out at the dore, and after that cam she,  
 And to the peple he seyde in this manere,  
 ‘This is my wyf,’ quod he, ‘that standeth here.  
 Honoureth hir, and loueth hir, I preye,  
 Who so me loueth; ther is namore to seye.’

And for that no-thing of hir olde gere  
 She sholde bringe in-to his hous, he bad  
 That wommen sholde dispoilen hir ryght there;  
 Of which thise ladyes were nat ryght glad  
 To handle hir clothes wher-in she was clad.  
 But natheles this mayde bryght of hewe  
 Fro foot to heed they clothed han al newe.

Hir heres han they kembd, that lay vntressed  
 Ful rudely, and with her fingres smale  
 A corone on hir heed they han ydressed,  
 And sette hir ful of nowches grete and smale;  
 Of hir array what sholde I make a tale?  
 Vnnethe the peple hir knew for hir fairnesse,  
 Whan she translated was in swich richesse.

This markis hath hir spoused with a ring  
 Brought for the samé cause, and than hir sette  
 Vp-on an hors, snow-whyte and wel ambling,  
 And to his paleys, er he lenger lette,  
 With ioyful peple that hir ladde and mette,  
 Conueyed hir, and thus the day they spende  
 In reuel til the sonne gan descende.

And shortly forth this tale for to chace,  
 I seye that to this newe markisesse  
 God hath swich fauour sent hir of his grace,  
 That it ne semed nat by lyklinesse  
 That she was born and fed in rudenesse,  
 As in a cote or in an oxe-stalle,  
 But norished in an emperoures halle.

\* \* \* \* \*

For though that euer vertuous was she,  
 She was encessed in swich excellence  
 Of thewes goode, yset in heigh bountee,  
 And so discreet and fair of eloquence,  
 So benigne and so digne of reuerence,  
 And coude so the peples herte embrace,  
 That ech hir louede that loked on hir face.

The story then goes on to relate the trials of Griselda's married life, and to extol the patience with which she bore them. The story is beautifully told, but the incidents are, to modern taste, cruel and absurd.

### SPENSER.

IF the pupil enter fully into the spirit of the four stanzas that follow, he will enjoy *The Faerie Queene*. The music of the verse will convey much of this spirit. These stanzas have at once the spaciousness and picturesqueness, the elevation and distinction that will be found characteristic of the whole poem. We feel at the outset that we are in an ideal world, remote from every-day life. We may, indeed, use Spenser's own line to describe *The Faerie Queene*:

“The world's sweet inn from pain and wearisome turmoil.”

A gentle Knight was pricking on the plaine,  
 Ycladd in mightie armes and silver shielde,  
 Wherein old dints of deepe wounds did remaine,  
 The cruel markes of many a bloudy felde;  
 Yet armes till that time did he never wield:  
 His angry steede did chide his foming bitt,  
 As much disdayning to the curbe to yield:  
 Full jolly knight he seemd, and faire did sitt,  
 As one for knightly giusts and fierce encounters fitt.



And on his brest a bloudie crosse he bore,  
 The deare remembrance of his dying Lord,  
 For whose sweete sake that glorious badge he wore,  
 And dead as living ever him ador'd:  
 Upon his shield the like was also scor'd,  
 For soveraine hope, which in his helpe he had:  
 Right faithfull true he was in deede and word,  
 But of his cheere did seeme too solemne sad;  
 Yet nothing did he dread, but ever was ydrad.

Upon a great adventure he was bond,  
 That greatest Gloriana to him gave,  
 That greatest glorious Queene of Faerie lond,  
 To winne him worship, and her grace to have,  
 Which of all earthly things he most did crave;  
 And ever as he rode, his hart did earne  
 To prove his puissance in battell brave  
 Upon his foe, and his new force to learne;  
 Upon his foe, a dragon horrible and stearne.

A lovely ladie rode him faire beside,  
 Upon a lowly asse more white then snow,  
 Yet she much whiter, but the same did hide  
 Under a vele, that wimpled was full low,  
 And over all a blacke stole she did throw,  
 As one that inly mournd: so was she sad,  
 And heavie sat upon her palfrey slow:  
 Seemed in heart some hidden care she had,  
 And by her in a line a milke white lambe she lad.

The following selection is an illustration of Spenser's descriptive power. There is high imagination in this portrait of Belphebe, and there are also the fanciful conceits that marked the poetry of Spenser's age. The description is rich and splendid with the "seld-seen costly" words that are so characteristic of Spenser's poetry. The passage has additional interest from the fact that it is one of those extravagant compliments to Queen Elizabeth for which Spenser was famous.

Eftsoone there stepped foorth  
 A goodly ladie clad in hunters weed,  
 That seemd tó be a woman of great worth,  
 And by her stately portance borne of heavenly birth.

Her face so faire, as flesh it seemed not,  
 But heavenly pourtraict of bright angels hew,  
 Cleare as the skie, withouten blame or blot,  
 Through goodly mixture of complexions dew;  
 And in her cheekes the vermeill red did shew  
 Like roses in a bed of lillies shed,  
 The which ambrosiall odours from them threw.  
 And gazers sence with double pleasure fed,  
 Hable to heale the sicke and to revive the ded.

In her faire eyes two living lamps did flame,  
 Kindled above at th' hevenly makers light,  
 And darted fyrie beames out of the same,  
 So passing persant, and so wondrous bright,  
 That quite bereav'd the rash beholders sight:  
 In them the blinded god his lustfull fire  
 To kindle oft assayd, but had no might;  
 For, with dredd maiestie and awfull yre,  
 She broke his wanton darts, and quenched base desire.

Her ivorie forehead, full of bountie brave,  
 Like a broad table did itselke dispred,  
 For Love his loftie triumphes to engrave,  
 And write the battels of his great godhead:  
 All good and honour might therein be red:  
 For there their dwelling was. And, when she spake,  
 Sweete wordes, like dropping honny, she did shed,  
 And twixt the perles and rubins softly brake  
 A silver sound, that heavenly musicke seemd to make.

Upon her eyelids many graces sate,  
 Under the shadow of her even browes,  
 Working belgards and amorous retrate,  
 And everie one her with a grace endowes:

And everie one with meekenesse to her bowes,  
 So glorious mirrhour of celestially grace,  
 And soveraine moniment of mortall vowes,  
 How shall fraile pen describe her heavenly face,  
 For feare through want of skill her beauty to disgrace.

So faire, and thousand thousand times more faire,  
 She seemd, when she presented was to sight;  
 And was yclad, for heat of scorching aire,  
 All in a silken Camus lilly whight,  
 Purpled upon with many a folded plight,  
 Which all above besprinkled was throughout  
 With golden aygulets, that glistred bright  
 Like twinckling starres; and all the skirt about  
 Was hemd with golden fringe.

\* \* \* \* \*

Her yellow lockes, crisped like golden wyre,  
 About her shoulders weren loosely shed,  
 And when the winde emongst them did inspyre,  
 They waved like a penon wyde dispred,  
 And low behinde her backe were scattered:  
 And, whether art it were or heedelesse hap,  
 As through the flouring forrest rash she fled,  
 In her rude haire sweet flowres themselves did lap,  
 And flourishing fresh leaves and blossomes did enwrap.

*Book II., Canto III.*

Spenser, following a fashion of the Italian poets, began each canto of his work with some general reflections in harmony with the incidents he was about to relate. These little introductions are often of rare beauty. One of the loveliest is given here :

And is there care in heaven? And is there love  
 In heavenly spirits to these creatures bace,  
 That may compassion of their evils move?  
 There is:—else much more wretched were the cace

Of men then beasts. But O th' exceeding grace  
 Of highest God, that loves his creatures so,  
 And all his workes with mercy doth embrace,  
 That blessed angels he sends to and fro,  
 To serve to wicked man, to serve his wicked foe!

How oft do they their silver bowers leave  
 To come to succour us that succour want,  
 How oft do they with golden pineons cleave  
 The flitting skyes, like flying pursuivant,  
 Against fowle feendes to ayd us militant:  
 They for us fight, they watch and dewly ward,  
 And their bright squadrons round about us plant;  
 And all for love and nothing for reward:  
 O, why should hevenly God to men have such regard?

*Book II., Canto VIII.*

Each member of the class should select his favorite passage from the First Book for reading aloud in recitation.

## SHAKESPEARE.

SHORT extracts from a dramatist convey but a feeble impression of his skill as a playwright or as a creator of character. The following selections from Shakespeare are mainly for the illustration of his thought, imagination, and expression.

The scene from *The Merchant of Venice* presents to us one of the most thrilling moments of the play. The father of Portia, so the story runs, had feared some fortune-hunter might seek to win her hand, and had therefore at his death devised a scheme by which to test the sincerity and worth of her lovers. Three caskets, of gold, silver, and lead, were to be placed before each suitor, and according to the choice he made, his fate was to be decided. One after another had tried his fortune, and had failed

to win the fair Portia. Now comes Bassanio, and Portia's heart beats high; for it is he whom she loves. She has confessed nothing in words; but Bassanio has confided to his friend Antonio that "sometimes from her eyes" he "did receive fair speechless messages."

ACT III., SCENE II. *Belmont. A room in Portia's house.*

*Enter* BASSANIO, PORTIA, GRATIANO, NERISSA, *and* Attendants.

*Portia.* I pray you, tarry: pause a day or two  
Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong,  
I lose your company: therefore forbear a while.  
There's something tells me, but it is not love,  
I would not lose you; and you know yourself,  
Hate counsels not in such a quality.  
But lest you should not understand me well,—  
And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought,—  
I would detain you here some month or two,  
Before you venture for me. I could teach you  
How to choose right, but then I am forsworn;  
So will I never be: so may you miss me;  
But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin,  
That I had been forsworn. Beshrew your eyes,  
They have o'erlook'd me and divided me;  
One half of me is yours, the other half yours,—  
Mine own, I would say; but if mine, then yours,  
And so all yours. O, these naughty times  
Put bars between the owners and their rights!  
And so, though yours, not yours. Prove it so,  
Let fortune go to hell for it, not I.  
I speak too long! but 'tis to peize the time,  
To eke it, and to draw it out in length,  
To stay you from election.

*Bassanio.*

Let me choose;

For as I am, I live upon the rack.

*Portia.* Upon the rack, Bassanio! then confess  
What treason there is mingled with your love.

*Bassanio.* None but that ugly treason of mistrust,  
Which makes me fear the enjoying of my love.



There may as well be amity and life  
'Tween snow and fire, as treason and my love.

*Portia.* Ay, but I fear you speak upon the rack,  
Where men enforced do speak anything.

*Bassanio.* Promise me life, and I'll confess the truth.

*Portia.* Well then, confess and live.

*Bassanio.* Confess and love

Had been the very sum of my confession.

O happy torment, when my torturer

Doth teach me answers for deliverance!

But let me to my fortune and the caskets.

*Portia.* Away, then! I am lock'd in one of them:

If you do love me, you will find me out.

Nerissa and the rest, stand all aloof.—

Let music sound while he doth make his choice;

Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,

Fading in music: that the comparison

May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream

And watery death-bed for him. He may win;

And what is music then? Then music is

Even as the flourish when true subjects bow

To a new-crowned monarch: such it is

As are those dulcet sounds in break of day,

That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear,

And summon him to marriage. Now he goes,

With no less presence, but with much more love,

Than young Alcides, when he did redeem

The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy

To the sea-monster: I stand for sacrifice;

The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,

With bleared visages, come forth to view

The issue of th' exploit. Go, Hercules!

Live thou, I live.—With much more dismay

I view the fight, than thou that mak'st the fray.

*A song, whilst BASSANIO comments on the caskets to himself.*

*Bas.* So may the outward shews be least themselves:

The world is still deceiv'd with ornament.

In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt

But, being season'd with a gracious voice,

Obscures the shew of evil? In religion,  
 What damned error, but some sober brow  
 Will bless it, and approve it with a text,  
 Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?  
 There is no vice so simple but assumes  
 Some mark of virtue on his outward parts:  
 How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false  
 As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins  
 The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars,  
 Who, inward search'd, have livers white as milk;  
 And these assume but valour's excrement  
 To render them redoubted! Look on beauty,  
 And you shall see 'tis purchas'd by the weight;  
 Which therein works a miracle in nature,  
 Making them lightest that wear most of it:  
 So are those crisped snaky golden locks,  
 Which make such wanton gambols with the wind,  
 Upon supposed fairness, often known  
 To be the dowry of a second head;  
 The skull that bred them, in the sepulchre.  
 Thus ornament is but the guiled shore  
 To a most dangerous sea, the beauteous scarf  
 Veiling an Indian beauty;—in a word,  
 The seeming truth which cunning times put on  
 To entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy gold,  
 Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee;  
 Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge  
 'Tween man and man: but thou, thou meagre lead,  
 Which rather threat'nest than dost promise aught,  
 Thy plainness moves me more than eloquence;  
 And here choose I. Joy be the consequence!

*Portia* [*Aside*]. How all the other passions fleet to air,  
 As doubtful thoughts, and rash-embrac'd despair,  
 And shuddering fear, and green-eyed jealousy!  
 O love! be moderate; allay thy ecstasy;  
 In measure rain thy joy; scant this excess.  
 I feel too much thy blessing; make it less,  
 For fear I surfeit.

*Bassanio*. What find I here?

[*Opening the leaden casket.*]

Fair Portia's counterfeit! What demi-god

Hath come so near creation? Move these eyes?  
 Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,  
 Seem they in motion? Here are sever'd lips,  
 Parted with sugar breath: so sweet a bar  
 Should sunder such sweet friends. Here in her hairs  
 The painter plays the spider, and hath woven  
 A golden mesh t' entrap the hearts of men  
 Faster than gnats in cobwebs: but her eyes!—  
 How could he see to do them? having made one,  
 Methinks it should have power to steal both his,  
 And leave itself unfurnish'd. Yet look, how far  
 The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow  
 In underprizing it, so far this shadow  
 Doth limp behind the substance.—Here's the scroll,  
 The continent and summary of my fortune.

*You that choose not by the view,  
 Chance as fair, and choose as true!  
 Since this fortune falls to you,  
 Be content and seek no new.  
 If you be well pleas'd with this,  
 And hold your fortune for your bliss,  
 Turn you where your lady is,  
 And claim her with a loving kiss.*

A gentle scroll.—Fair lady, by your leave;  
 I come by note, to give and to receive. [Kissing her.  
 Like one of two contending in a prize,  
 That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes,  
 Hearing applause and universal shout,  
 Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt  
 Whether those peals of praise be his or no;  
 So, thrice-fair lady, stand I, even so,  
 As doubtful whether what I see be true,  
 Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratified by you.

*Portia.* You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,  
 Such as I am: though for myself alone  
 I would not be ambitious in my wish,  
 To wish myself much better; yet, for you  
 I would be trebled twenty times myself,  
 A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times more rich,  
 That only to stand high in your account,

I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,  
Exceed account: but the full sum of me  
Is sum of nothing; which, to term in gross,  
Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractis'd:  
Happy in this, she is not yet so old  
But she may learn; happier than this,  
She is not bred so dull but she can learn;  
Happiest of all in that her gentle spirit  
Commits itself to yours to be directed,  
As from her lord, her governor, her king.  
Myself and what is mine to you and yours  
Is now converted: but now I was the lord  
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,  
Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now,  
This house, these servants, and this same myself  
Are yours, my lord. I give them with this ring;  
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,  
Let it presage the ruin of your love,  
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

*Bassanio.* Madam, you have bereft me of all words;  
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins:  
And there is such confusion in my powers  
As, after some oration fairly spoke  
By a beloved prince, there doth appear  
Among the buzzing pleased multitude;  
Where every something, being blent together,  
Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy,  
Express'd and not express'd. But when this ring  
Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence:  
O, then be bold to say, Bassanio's dead!

The preceding scene from *The Merchant of Venice* has shown us one phase of the character of Portia. The scene that follows will throw light on the other great character of this play, the Jewish money-lender, Shylock. Antonio has borrowed money of him, and has agreed to forfeit a pound of flesh if he should not be able to pay the debt on the day appointed. Another circumstance referred to in this scene is the flight of Jessica, Shylock's daughter, from

her father's house. She has carried away with her a store of his hoarded ducats.

*Salanio.* How now, Shylock? what news among the merchants?

*Shylock.* You knew, none so well, none so well as you, of my daughter's flight.

*Salarino.* That's certain: I, for my part, knew the tailor that made the wings she flew withal.

*Shylock.* My own flesh and blood to rebel!

*Salarino.* There is more difference between thy flesh and hers than between jet and ivory; more between your bloods than there is between red wine and Rhenish. But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea or no?

*Shylock.* There I have another bad match: a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto; a beggar, that was used to come so smug upon the mart; let him look to his bond: he was wont to call me usurer; let him look to his bond: he was wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy; let him look to his bond.

*Salarino.* Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh: what's that good for?

*Shylock.* To bait fish withal: if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me, and hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is! If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be, by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villany you teach me, I will execute; and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

*Enter a Servant.*

*Servant.* Gentlemen, my master Antonio is at his house, and desires to speak with you both.

*Salarino.* We have been up and down to seek him.



*Enter TUBAL.*

*Salanio.* Here comes another of the tribe: a third cannot be matched, unless the devil himself turn Jew.

*[Exeunt Salanio, Salarino, and Servant.]*

*Shylock.* How now, Tubal! what news from Genoa? hast thou found my daughter?

*Tubal.* I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

*Shylock.* Why, there, there, there, there! a diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now; I never felt it till now; two thousand ducats in that; and other precious, precious jewels. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! Would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them?—Why, so: and I know not how much is spent in the search: why, thou loss upon loss! the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no revenge: nor no ill luck stirring but what lights o' my shoulders; no sighs but o' my breathing; no tears but o' my shedding.

*Tubal.* Yes, other men have ill luck too. Antonio, as I heard in Genoa,—

*Shylock.* What, what, what? ill luck, ill luck?

*Tubal.* Hath an argosy cast away, coming from Tripolis.

*Shylock.* I thank God! I thank God! Is it true? is it true?

*Tubal.* I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wrack.

*Shylock.* I thank thee, good Tubal!—Good news, good news! ha, ha!—Where? in Genoa?

*Tubal.* Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, in one night fourscore ducats.

*Shylock.* Thou stick'st a dagger in me. I shall never see my gold again. Fourscore ducats at a sitting! fourscore ducats!

*Tubal.* There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break.

*Shylock.* I am very glad of it. I'll plague him; I'll torture him. I am glad of it.

*Tubal.* One of them shewed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

*Shylock.* Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal: it was my turquoise; I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor: I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.

*Tubal.* But Antonio is certainly undone.

*Shylock.* Nay, that's true, that's very true. Go, Tubal, fee me an officer; bespeak him a fortnight before. I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for, were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandise I will. Go, go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue: go, good Tubal; at our synagogue, Tubal.

[*Exeunt.*]

Act III., Scene 1.

The following selection is from the play of *Hamlet*. A band of strolling players have arrived at the castle of Elsinore, and are about to act a play before the court (see page 41). Hamlet, who is a theatre-goer and accomplished critic of the stage, gives the players some excellent advice.

SCENE II. *A Hall in the Castle.*

*Enter HAMLET and Players.*

*Hamlet.* Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus, but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise. I could have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it.

1 *Player.* I warrant your honour.

*Hamlet.* Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 't were, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that

highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

1 *Player*. I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us, sir.

*Hamlet*. O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them; for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too, though in the mean time some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villanous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.

[*Exeunt Players.*]

Act III., Scene 2.

The famous soliloquy that follows shows Hamlet in a very different mood. He feels his sorrows too heavy to bear; he wishes life were over, and yet, when he comes face to face with death, he shrinks back in awe from the vast unknown beyond the grave. This speech of Hamlet expresses "the burden and the mystery" that most thoughtful people feel in certain moods.

*Hamlet*. To be, or not to be,—that is the question:  
Whether 't is nobler in the mind to suffer  
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,  
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,  
And by opposing end them? To die,—to sleep,—  
No more; and by a sleep to say we end  
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks  
That flesh is heir to,—'t is a consummation  
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die,—to sleep,—  
To sleep! perchance to dream! ay, there's the rub;  
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come  
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,  
Must give us pause: there's the respect  
That makes calamity of so long life;  
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,  
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,  
The pangs of dispriz'd love, the law's delay,

The insolence of office, and the spurns  
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes,  
 When he himself might his quietus make  
 With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,  
 To grunt and sweat under a weary life,  
 But that the dread of something after death,  
 The undiscover'd country from whose bourn  
 No traveller returns, puzzles the will,  
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have  
 Than fly to others that we know not of?  
 Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;  
 And thus the native hue of resolution  
 Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,  
 And enterprises of great pith and moment  
 With this regard their currents turn awry,  
 And lose the name of action.

Act III., Scene 1.

Throughout the plays of Shakespeare, and of the other Elizabethan dramatists, are scattered lovely bits of song. The first given here is from *Cymbeline*, and is a morning song to awaken the sleeping Imogen: "a wonderful sweet air, with admirable rich words to it."

Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,  
 And Phœbus gins arise,  
 His steeds to water at those springs  
 On chaliced flowers that lies;  
 And winking Mary-buds begin  
 To ope their golden eyes;  
 With everything that pretty is,  
 My lady sweet, arise;  
 Arise, arise!

The next selection is the song of the "dainty Ariel," the exquisite little sprite who serves the magician Prospero, in the play of *The Tempest*.

Where the bee sucks, there suck I:  
 In a cowslip's bell I lie;

There I couch when owls do cry.  
 On the bat's back I do fly  
 After Summer, merrily.  
 Merrily, merrily, shall I live now,  
 Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.

The following is one of Shakespeare's most beautiful sonnets upon friendship :

Let me not to the marriage of true minds  
 Admit impediments. Love is not love  
 Which alters when it alteration finds,  
 Or bends with the remover to remove:  
 O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark  
 That looks on tempests and is never shaken;  
 It is the star to every wandering bark,  
 Whose worth 's unknown, although his height be taken.  
 Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks  
 Within his bending sickle's compass come;  
 Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,  
 But bears it out even to the edge of doom.  
     If this be error and upon me prov'd,  
     I never writ, nor no man ever lov'd.

It is suggested that the pupil commit to memory several of the following brief extracts from Shakespeare:

I saw young Harry, with his beaver on,  
 His cuisses on his thighs, gallantly armed,  
 Rise from the ground like feathered Mercury,  
 And vaulted with such ease into his seat,  
 As if an angel dropped down from the clouds,  
 To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus  
 And witch the world with noble horsemanship.

*King Henry IV., Part I.—Act IV., Scene 1.*

Sweet are the uses of adversity,  
 Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,  
 Wears yet a precious jewel in his head;



And this our life exempt from public haunt  
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,  
Sermons in stones and good in everything.

*As You Like It.*—Act II., Scene 1.

And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,  
The cloud-capped towers, the great globe itself,  
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,  
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,  
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff  
As dreams are made on; and our little life  
Is rounded with a sleep.

*The Tempest.*—Act IV., Scene 1.

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!  
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music  
Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night  
Become the touches of sweet harmony.  
Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven  
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:  
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st  
But in his motion like an angel sings,  
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;  
Such harmony is in immortal souls;  
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay  
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

*The Merchant of Venice.*—Act V., Scene 1.

The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,  
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;  
And as imagination bodies forth  
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen  
Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothing  
A local habitation and a name.

*A Midsummer Night's Dream.*—Act V., Scene 1.

If music be the food of love, play on;  
That strain again! it had a dying fall;  
O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound  
That breathes upon a bank of violets,  
Stealing and giving odour!

*Twelfth Night.*—Act I., Scene 1.

The man that hath no music in himself,  
Nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils.

*The Merchant of Venice.*—Act V., Scene 1.

Her voice was ever soft,  
Gentle, and low, an excellent thing in woman.

*King Lear.*—Act V., Scene 3.

She loved me for the dangers I had passed,  
And I loved her that she did pity them.

*Othello.*—Act I., Scene 3.

It is advised that the class should also read aloud the third act of *Julius Cæsar*.

## B A C O N .

THE following essay of Bacon illustrates several of the points mentioned on page 69. Let the pupil show which these are ; and let him consider whether this essay justifies Ben Jonson's estimate of Bacon.

### OF STUDIES.

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight, is in privateness and retiring ; for ornament, is in discourse ; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business ; for expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars one by one ; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies, is sloth ; to use them too much for ornament, is affectation ; to make judgment wholly by their rules, is the humor of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience ; for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study ; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men contemn studies,

simple men admire them, and wise men use them ; for they teach not their own use ; but that is a wisdom without them and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested ; that is, some books are to be read only in parts ; others to be read, but not curiously ; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others ; but that would be only in the less important arguments and the meaner sort of books ; else distilled books are, like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading maketh a full man ; conference a ready man ; and writing an exact man ; and, therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory ; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit ; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not. Histories make men wise ; poets, witty ; the mathematics, subtile ; natural philosophy, deep ; moral, grave ; logic and rhetoric, able to contend : “Abeunt studia in mores ;” nay, there is no stand or impediment in the wit, but may be wrought out by fit studies. Like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises, bowling is good for the stone and reins, shooting for the lungs and breast, gentle walking for the stomach, riding for the head and the like ; so, if a man’s wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics ; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again ; if his wit be not apt to distinguish or find difference, let him study the schoolmen, for they are “Cymini sectores.” If he be not apt to beat over matters, and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers’ cases ; so every defect of the mind may have a special receipt.

## MILTON.

ON pages 78 and 79 some account is given of the companion poems, *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. Let the pupil judge for himself whether these two pieces answer to the description there given. The most characteristic part of each poem is selected.

## L'ALLEGRO.

Haste thee nymph, and bring with thee  
Jest and youthful Jollity,  
Quips and cranks, and wanton wiles,  
Nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles,  
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,  
And love to live in dimple sleek;  
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,  
And Laughter holding both his sides.  
Come, and trip it as ye go  
On the light fantastic toe,  
And in thy right hand lead with thee  
The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty;  
And if I give thee honour due,  
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,  
To live with her, and live with thee,  
In unproved pleasures free;  
To hear the lark begin his flight,  
And singing startle the dull night,  
From his watch-tow'r in the skies,  
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;  
Then to come in spite of sorrow,  
And at my window bid good morrow,  
Through the sweet-briar, or the vine,  
Or the twisted eglantine.  
While the cock with lively din,  
Scatters the rear of darkness thin,  
And to the stack, or the barn door,  
Stoutly struts his dames before:  
Oft list'ning how the hounds and horn  
Cheerly rouse the slumbring Morn,

From the side of some hoar hill,  
Through the high wood echoing shrill.  
Sometime walking not unseen  
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,  
Right against the eastern gate,  
Where the great Sun begins his state,  
Rob'd in flames, and amber light,  
The clouds in thousand liveries dight.  
While the ploughman near at hand,  
Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,  
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,  
And the mower whets his sithe,  
And every shepherd tells his tale  
Under the hawthorn in the dale.  
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures  
Whilst the landscape round it measures;  
Russet lawns, and fallows gray,  
Where the nibbling flocks do stray,  
Mountains on whose barren breast  
The labouring clouds do often rest;  
Meadows trim with daisies pied,  
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide.  
Towers, and battlements it sees  
Bosom'd high in tufted trees,  
Where perhaps some beauty lies,  
The Cynosure of neighbouring eyes.  
Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes,  
From betwixt two aged oaks;  
Where Corydon and Thyrsis met,  
Are at their savoury dinner set  
Of herbs, and other country messes,  
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;  
And then in haste her bower she leaves,  
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;  
Or if the earlier season lead  
To the tann'd haycock in the mead.  
Sometimes with secure delight  
The upland hamlets will invite;  
When the merry bells ring round,  
And the jocund rebecks sound



To many a youth, and many a maid,  
 Dancing in the chequer'd shade;  
 And young and old come forth to play  
 On a sunshine holiday,  
 Till the live-long day-light fail;  
 Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,  
 With stories told of many a feat,  
 How faery Mab the junkets eat;  
 She was pincht and pull'd she sed;  
 And he by friars' lantern led,  
 Tells how the drudging goblin sweat  
 To earn his cream-bowl duly set;  
 When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,  
 His shadowy flail hath thresh'd the corn  
 That ten day-labourers could not end.  
 Then lies him down the lubbar fiend,  
 And stretcht out all the chimney's length,  
 Basks at the fire his hairy strength;  
 And crop-full out of doors he flings,  
 Ere the first cock his matin rings.  
 Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,  
 By whispering winds soon lull'd asleep.

### IL PENSEROSO.

Come pensive Nun, devout and pure,  
 Sober, stedfast, and demure,  
 All in a robe of darkest grain,  
 Flowing with majestic train,  
 And sable stole of cypres lawn,  
 Over thy decent shoulders drawn.  
 Come, but keep thy wonted state,  
 With ev'n step, and musing gait,  
 And looks commercing with the skies,  
 Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:  
 There held in holy passion still,  
 Forget thyself to marble, till  
 With a sad leaden downward cast,  
 Thou fix them on the earth as fast.  
 And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,  
 Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,

And hears the Muses in a ring,  
Aye round about Jove's altar sing.  
And add to these retired Leisure,  
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure;  
But first, and chiefest, with thee bring,  
Him that soars on golden wing,  
Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,  
The cherub Contemplation,  
And the mute Silence hist along,  
'Less Philomel will deign a song,  
In her sweetest, saddest plight,  
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,  
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke,  
Gently o'er th' accustom'd oak:  
Sweet bird that shunn'st the noise of folly,  
Most musical, most melancholy!  
Thee chauntress oft the woods among,  
I woo to hear thy even-song;  
And missing thee, I walk unseen  
On the dry smooth-shaven green,  
To behold the wandring Moon,  
Riding near her highest noon,  
Like one that had been led astray  
Through the Heav'ns wide pathless way;  
And oft, as if her head she bow'd,  
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.  
Oft on a plat of rising ground,  
I hear the far off curfeu sound,  
Over some wide-water'd shore,  
Swinging slow with sullen roar;  
Or if the air will not permit,  
Some still removed place will fit,  
Where glowing embers through the room  
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom,  
Far from all resort of mirth,  
Save the cricket on the hearth,  
Or the bellman's drowsy charm,  
To bless the doors from nightly harm:  
Or let my lamp at midnight hour  
Be seen in some high lonely tow'r,  
Where I may oft out-watch the Bear.

The following passage from *Paradise Lost* describes the hosts of Satan, as he marshals them with "warlike sound of trumpets loud and clarions." The selection illustrates the power of imagination, the splendor of description, and matchless beauty of sound, that were Milton's greatest gifts. Here again is one of Milton's exquisite tributes to the influence of music.

He his wonted pride  
Soon recollecting, with high words that bore  
Semblance of worth, not substance, gently rais'd  
Their fainting courage, and dispell'd their fears:  
Then straight commands that at the warlike sound  
Of trumpets loud and clarions be uprear'd  
His mighty standard; that proud honour claim'd  
Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall;  
Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurl'd  
Th' imperial ensign, which full high advanc'd  
Shon like a meteor streaming to the wind,  
With gems and golden lustre rich imblaz'd,  
Seraphic arms and trophies: all the while  
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds:  
At which the universal host upsent  
A shout that tore Hell's concave, and beyond  
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.  
All in a moment through the gloom were seen  
Ten thousand banners rise into the air  
With orient colours waving; with them rose  
A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms  
Appear'd, and serried shields in thick array  
Of depth immeasurable; anon they move  
In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood  
Of flutes and soft recorders; such as rais'd  
To highth of noblest temper heroes old  
Arming to battle, and instead of rage  
Deliberate valour breath'd, firm and unmov'd  
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat;  
Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage  
With solemn touches, troubl'd thoughts, and chase  
Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain

From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they  
 Breathing united force with fixed thought  
 Mov'd on in silence, to soft pipes that charm'd  
 Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil; and now  
 Advanc't in view, they stand, a horrid front  
 Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise  
 Of warriors old with order'd spear and shield,  
 Awaiting what command their mighty chief  
 Had to impose: he through the armed files  
 Darts his experienc't eye; and soon traverse  
 The whole battalion views, their order due,  
 Their visages and stature as of gods,  
 Their number last he sums. And now his heart  
 Distends with pride, and hardning in his strength  
 Glories: for never since created man,  
 Met such imbodied force, as nam'd with these  
 Could merit more than that small infantry  
 Warr'd on by cranes.

Satan has still enough nobility of soul to regret the ruin he has brought upon his followers, and to be touched by their loyalty. His character is nowhere so worthy of respect as at the moment when he addresses his hosts. "Their dread commander,"

Above the rest  
 In shape and gesture proudly eminent  
 Stood like a tow'r; his form had yet not lost  
 All her original brightness, nor appear'd  
 Less than archangel ruin'd, and th' excess  
 Of glory obscur'd: as when the sun new ris'n  
 Looks through the horizontal misty air  
 Shorn of his beams, or from behind the moon  
 In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds  
 On half the nations, and with fear of change  
 Perplexes monarchs. Dark'n'd so, yet shon  
 Above them all th' Archangel: but his face  
 Deep scars of thunder had intrencht, and care  
 Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows  
 Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride

Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast  
 Signs of remorse and passion to behold  
 The fellows of his crime, the followers rather,  
 (Far other once beheld in bliss) condemn'd  
 For ever now to have their lot in pain,  
 Millions of spirits for his fault amerc't  
 Of Heav'n, and from eternal splendors flung  
 For his revolt, yet faithful how they stood,  
 Their glory wither'd. As when Heav'n's fire  
 Hath scath'd the forest oaks, or mountain pines,  
 With singed top their stately growth though bare  
 Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepar'd  
 To speak; whereat their doubl'd ranks they bend  
 From wing to wing, and half enclose him round  
 With all his peers: attention held them mute.  
 Thrice he assay'd, and thrice in spite of scorn,  
 Tears such as angels weep, burst forth: at last  
 Words interwove with sighs found out their way.

The following soliloquy of the blind Samson Agonistes has a strong personal interest, since Milton wrote the poem when he himself was "blind among enemies." As poetry, it is uneven in excellence, but its moral elevation is noble and impressive. The situation may be stated in Milton's own words: "Samson made captive, blind, and now in the prison at Gaza, there to labour as in a common workhouse, on a festival day, in the general cessation from labour, comes forth into the open air, to a place nigh, somewhat retired, there to sit awhile and bemoan his condition." The sixteenth chapter of Judges will further explain the situation.

A little onward lend thy guiding hand  
 To these dark steps, a little farther on;  
 For yonder bank hath choice of sun or shade:  
 There I am wont to sit, when any chance  
 Relieves me from my task of servile toil,  
 Daily in the common prison else injoin'd me;  
 Where I a prisoner chain'd, scarce freely draw



The air imprison'd also, close and damp,  
Unwholesome draught: but here I feel amends,  
The breath of Heaven fresh blowing, pure and sweet,  
With day-spring born; here leave me to respire.  
This day a solemn feast the people hold  
To Dagon their sea idol, and forbid  
Laborious works; unwillingly this rest  
Their superstition yields me; hence with leave  
Retiring from the popular noise, I seek  
This unfrequented place to find some ease;  
Ease to the body some, none to the mind  
From restless thoughts, that like a deadly swarm  
Of hornets arm'd, no sooner found alone,  
But rush upon me thronging, and present  
Times past, what once I was, and what am now.  
O wherefore was my birth from heaven foretold  
Twice by an angel, who at last in sight  
Of both my parents all in flames ascended  
From off the altar, where an off'ring burn'd,  
As in a fiery column charioting  
His god-like presence, and from some great act  
Or benefit reveal'd to Abraham's race?  
Why was my breeding order'd and prescrib'd  
As of a person separate to God,  
Design'd for great exploits; if I must die  
Betray'd, captiv'd, and both my eyes put out,  
Made of my enemies the scorn and gaze;  
To grind in brazen fetters under task  
With this Heaven-gifted strength? O glorious strength  
Put to the labour of a beast, debas't  
Lower than bondslave! Promise was that I  
Should Israel from Philistian yoke deliver;  
Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him  
Eyeless in Gaza at the mill with slaves,  
Himself in bonds under Philistian yoke;  
Yet stay, let me not rashly call in doubt  
Divine prediction; what if all foretold  
Had been fulfill'd but through mine own default,  
Whom have I to complain of but myself?  
Who this high gift of strength committed to me,  
In what part lodg'd, how easily bereft me,

Under the seal of silence could not keep,  
But weakly to a woman must reveal it,  
O'ercome with importunity and tears.  
O impotence of mind, in body strong!  
But what is strength, without a double share  
Of wisdom? vast, unwieldy, burdensome,  
Proudly secure, yet liable to fall  
By weakest subtleties; not made to rule,  
But to subserve where wisdom bears command.  
God, when he gave me strength, to show withal  
How slight the gift was, hung it in my hair.  
But peace; I must not quarrel with the will  
Of highest dispensation, which herein  
Haply had ends above my reach to know:  
Suffices that to me strength is my bane,  
And proves the source of all my miseries;  
So many, and so huge, that each apart  
Would ask a life to wail; but chief of all,  
O loss of sight, of thee I most complain!  
Blind among enemies, O worse than chains,  
Dungeon, or beggary, or decrepit age!  
Light the prime work of God to me is extinct,  
And all her various objects of delight  
Annull'd, which might in part my grief have eas'd  
Inferior to the vilest now become  
Of man or worm; the vilest here excel me,  
They creep, yet see; I dark in light, expos'd  
To daily fraud, contempt, abuse and wrong,  
Within doors, or without, still as a fool,  
In power of others, never in my own;  
Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half.  
O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,  
Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse  
Without all hope of day!  
O first created beam, and thou great Word,  
'Let there be light,' and light was over all;  
Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree?  
The sun to me is dark  
And silent as the moon,  
When she deserts the night,  
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.

Since light so necessary is to life,  
And almost life itself, if it be true  
That light is in the soul,  
She all in every part; why was the sight  
To such a tender ball as th' eye confin'd,  
So obvious and so easy to be quench't?  
And not, as feeling, through all parts diffus'd,  
That she might look at will through every pore?  
Then had I not been thus exil'd from light;  
As in the land of darkness, yet in light  
To live a life half dead, a living death,  
And buried; but (O yet more miserable!)  
Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave.  
Buried, yet not exempt  
By privilege of death and burial  
From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs;  
But made hereby obnoxious more  
To all the miseries of life,  
Life in captivity  
Among inhuman foes.  
But who are these? for with joint pace I hear  
The tread of many feet steering this way;  
Perhaps my enemies who come to stare  
At my affliction, and perhaps t' insult,  
Their daily practice to afflict me more.

Milton's prose writings have a single aim, the promotion of liberty. At one time he defends religious liberty; at another, the liberty of the citizen; and again, the domestic freedom of husband and wife. In the *Areopagitica*, he pleads for liberty in another direction. In 1643, Parliament had ordered that no books should be issued without a rigid inspection by certain officers of the law, who were to seize and destroy any piece of writing tending to the "defamation of Religion and government." Milton saw in this measure great danger to the freedom of speech that he and all wise men recognize as so necessary to the safety of a people. "Lastly," he says, "I wrote my *Areopagitica* in order to deliver the press from the restraints with which

it was encumbered ; that the power of determining what was true and what was false, what ought to be published and what to be suppressed, might no longer be entrusted to a few illiterate and illiberal individuals, who refused their sanction to any work which contained views or sentiments at all above the level of the vulgar superstition." The *Areopagitica* is an example of the impassioned, imaginative prose of Milton. The structure of his sentence differs much from the modern sentence of a writer like Macaulay. One sonorous clause rolls on after another, till a long and involved, but often majestic and thrilling, sentence is the result. As an argumentative writer, Milton is not calm and lucid, as we now expect such a writer to be ; he kindles and excites his reader rather like a poet than like a reasoner. Consider whether this be true of the two passages that follow.

I deny not but that it is of greatest concernment in the Church and Commonwealth, to have a vigilant eye how Bookes demeane themselves as well as men ; and thereafter to confine, imprison, and do sharpest justice on them as malefactors : For Books are not absolutely dead things, but doe contain a potencie of life in them to be as active as that soule was whose progeny they are ; nay, they do preserve as in a violl the purest efficacie and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous Dragons teeth ; and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men. And yet on the other hand, unlesse warinesse be us'd, as good almost kill a Man as kill a good Book ; who kills a Man kills a reasonable creature, Gods Image ; but hee who destroyes a good Booke, kills reason it selfe, kills the Image of God as it were in the eye Many a man lives a burden to the Earth ; but a good Booke is the pretious life-blood of a master spirit, imbalmd and treasur'd up on purpose to a life beyond life. 'Tis true, no age can restore a life, whereof perhaps there is no great losse ; and revolutions of ages doe not oft recover the losse of a rejected truth, for the want of which whole Nations fare the

worse. We should be wary therefore what persecution we raise against the living labours of publick men, how we spill that season'd life of man preserv'd and stor'd up in Books ; since we see a kinde of homicide may be thus committed, sometimes a martyr-dome, and if it extend to the whole impression, a kinde of massacre, whereof the execution ends not in the slaying of an elementall life, but strikes at that ethereall and fift essence, the breath of reason it selfe, slaies an immortality rather then a life. But lest I should be condemn'd of introducing licence, while I oppose Licencing, I refuse not the paines to be so much Historicall as will serve to shew what hath been done by ancient and famous Commonwealths against this disorder, till the very time that this project of licencing crept out of the *Inquisition*, was catcht up by our Prelates, and hath caught some of our Presbyters.

If therefore ye be loath to dishearten utterly and discontent, not the mercenary crew of false pretenders to learning, but the free and ingenuous sort of such as evidently were born to study and love lerning for it self, not for lucre or any other end but the service of God and of truth, and perhaps that lasting fame and perpetuity of praise which God and good men have consented shall be the reward of those whose publisht labours advance the good of mankind, then know, that so far to distrust the judgement and the honesty of one who hath but a common repute in learning and never yet offended, as not to count him fit to print his mind without a tutor and examiner, lest he should drop a scism or something of corruption, is the greatest displeasure and indignity to a free and knowing spirit that can be put upon him. What advantage is it to be a man over it is to be a boy at school, if we have only scapt the ferular to come under the fescu of an *Imprimatur* ? if serious and elaborat writings, as if they were no more then the theam of a Grammar lad under his Pedagogue must not be utter'd without the cursory eyes of a temporizing and extemporizing licencer ? He who is not trusted with his own actions, his drift not being known to be evill, and standing to the hazard of law and penalty, has no great argument to think himself reputed in the Commonwealth wherein he was born for other then a fool or a foreiner. When a man writes to the world, he summons up all his reason and deliberation to assist him ; he



searches, meditates, is industrious, and likely consults and confers with his judicious friends; after all which done he takes himself to be inform'd in what he writes as well as any that writ before him; if in this the most consummate act of his fidelity and ripeness, no years, no industry, no former proof of his abilities can bring him to that state of maturity as not to be still mistrusted and suspected, unless he carry all his consideration diligence, all his midnight watchings, and expence of *Palladian* oyl, to the hasty view of an unlesur'd licencer, perhaps much his younger, perhaps far his inferiour in judgement, perhaps one who never knew the labour of book-writing, and if he be not repulst or slighted, must appear in Print like a punie with his guardian and his censors hand on the back of his title to be his bayl and surety, that he is no idiot or seducer, it cannot be but a dishonor and derogation to the author, to the book, to the privilege and dignity of Learning.

## BUNYAN.

CHRISTIAN and Faithful, in their journey from the City of Destruction to the New Jerusalem, are obliged to pass through Vanity Fair; that is, they encounter the temptations of worldliness in every form. Bunyan gives an account of this thoughtless community, with its whole heart set on the things of this world. The frequenters of Vanity Fair and the two pilgrims to the New Jerusalem recognize at once their uncongeniality: "They seemed barbarians each to the other." The dress, the speech, the unworldliness of the pilgrims gave great offense, till at last they were confined as madmen.

Let the pupil follow out Bunyan's meaning through the details of the story. Why did Thackeray name his famous novel *Vanity Fair*?

Then I saw in my dream, that when they were got out of the wilderness, they presently saw a town before them, and the name

of that town is Vanity ; and at the town there is a fair kept, called Vanity Fair. It is kept all the year long. It beareth the name of Vanity Fair, because the town where it is kept is lighter than vanity ; and also, because all that is there sold, or that cometh thither, is vanity, as is the saying of the wise, All that cometh is vanity.

This fair is no new-erected business, but a thing of ancient standing. I will show you the original of it.

Almost five thousand years ago there were pilgrims walking to the Celestial City, as these two honest persons are ; and Beelzebub, Apollyon, and Legion, with their companions, perceiving by the path that the pilgrims made, that their way to the city lay through this town of Vanity, they contrived here to set up a fair ; a fair wherein should be sold all sorts of vanity, and that it should last all the year long. Therefore at this fair are all such merchandise sold as houses, lands, trades, places, honours, preferments, titles, countries, kingdoms, lusts, pleasures ; and delights of all sorts, as wives, husbands, children, masters, servants, lives, blood, bodies, souls, silver, gold, pearls, precious stones, and what not.

And moreover, at this fair there is at all times to be seen jugglings, cheats, games, plays, fools, apes, knaves, and rogues, and that of every kind.

Here are to be seen, too, and that for nothing, thefts, murders, false swearers, and that of a blood-red colour.

And as, in other fairs of less moment, there are the several rows and streets under their proper names, where such and such wares are vended ; so here likewise you have the proper places, rows, streets, (namely, countries and kingdoms,) where the wares of this fair are soonest to be found. Here is the Britain Row, the French Row, the Italian Row, the Spanish Row, the German Row, where several sorts of vanities are to be sold. But as in other fairs some one commodity is the chief of all the fair, so the ware of Rome and her merchandise is greatly promoted in this fair ; only our English nation, with some others, have taken a dislike thereat.

Now, as I said, the way to the Celestial City lies just through this town where this lusty fair is kept ; and he that would go to the city, and yet not go through this town, must needs go out of the world.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now these pilgrims, as I said, must needs go through this fair. Well, so they did ; but, behold, even as they entered into the fair, all the people in the fair were moved, and the town itself, as it were, in a hubbub about them, and that for several reasons : For,

First, The pilgrims were clothed with such kind of raiment as was diverse from the raiment of any that traded in that fair. The people, therefore, of the fair made a great gazing upon them ; some said they were fools ; some they were bedlams ; and some they were outlandish men.

Secondly, And as they wondered at their apparel, so they did likewise at their speech ; for few could understand what they said. They naturally spoke the language of Canaan ; but they that kept the fair were the men of this world. So that from one end of the fair to the other, they seemed barbarians each to the other.

Thirdly, But that which did not a little amuse the merchandizers was, that these pilgrims set very light by all their wares. They cared not so much as to look upon them ; and if they called upon them to buy, they would put their fingers in their ears, and cry, Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and look upward, signifying that their trade and traffic was in heaven.

One chanced mockingly, beholding the carriage of the men, to say unto them, What will ye buy ? But they, looking gravely upon him, said, We buy the truth. At that, there was an occasion taken to despise the men the more ; some mocking, some taunting, some speaking reproachfully, and some calling upon others to smite them. At last things came to a hubbub, and great stir in the fair, insomuch that all order was confounded. Now was word presently brought to the great one of the fair, who quickly came down and deputed some of his most trusty friends to take those men into examination, about whom the fair was almost overturned. So the men were brought to examination ; and they that sat upon them asked whence they came, whither they went, and what they did there in such an unusual garb. The men told them that they were pilgrims and strangers in the world, and that they were going to their own country, which was the heavenly Jerusalem ; and that they had given no occasion to the men of the town, nor yet to the mer-

chandizers, thus to abuse them, and to let them in their journey, except it was for that, when one asked them what they would buy, they said they would buy the truth. But they that were appointed to examine them, did not believe them to be any other than bedlams and mad, or else such as came to put all things into a confusion in the fair. Therefore they took them and beat them, and besmeared them with dirt, and then put them into the cage, that they might be made a spectacle to all the men of the fair.

The next passage from *Pilgrim's Progress* shows Christian near the end of life. His trials and temptations lie behind him, and he rests at the close in joy and peace, with his eyes fixed upon the Celestial City, in sight at last.

Now I saw in my dream, that by this time the pilgrims were got over the Enchanted Ground, and entering into the country of Beulah, whose air was very sweet and pleasant; the way lying directly through it, they solaced themselves there for a season. Yea, here they heard continually the singing of birds, and saw every day the flowers appear in the earth, and heard the voice of the turtle in the land. In this country the sun shineth night and day: wherefore this was beyond the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and also out of the reach of Giant Despair; neither could they from this place so much as see Doubting-castle. Here they were within sight of the City they were going to: also here met them some of the inhabitants thereof; for in this land the shining ones commonly walked, because it was upon the borders of heaven. In this land also the contract between the Bride and the Bridegroom was renewed; yea, here as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so doth their God rejoice over them. Here they had no want of corn and wine; for in this place they met with abundance of what they had sought for in all their pilgrimages. Here they heard voices from out of the City, loud voices, saying, Say ye to the daughters of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh! Behold, his reward is with him! Here all the inhabitants of the country

called them the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord, sought out, &c.

Now, as they walked in this land, they had more rejoicing than in parts more remote from the kingdom to which they were bound; and drawing near to the City, they had yet a more perfect view thereof. It was builded of pearls and precious stones, also the streets thereof were paved with gold ; so that, by reason of the natural glory of the City, and the reflection of the sunbeams upon it, Christian with desire fell sick ; Hopeful also had a fit or two of the same disease : wherefore here they lay by it awhile, crying out because of their pangs, If you see my Beloved, tell him that I am sick of love.

But, being a little strengthened, and better able to bear their sickness, they walked on their way, and came yet nearer and nearer, where were orchards, vineyards, and gardens, and their gates opened into the highway. Now, as they came up to these places, behold the gardener stood in the way ; to whom the pilgrims said, Whose goodly vineyards and gardens are these ? He answered, They are the King's, and are planted here for his own delights, and also for the solace of pilgrims. So the gardener had them into the vineyards, and bid them refresh themselves with the dainties ; he also showed them there the King's walks and the arbours, where he delighteth to be : and here they tarried and slept.

The death of Christian is figured as the crossing of a deep river. On the other shore the pilgrims are met by two Shining Ones.

Now you must note, that the City stood upon a mighty hill ; but the pilgrims went up that hill with ease, because they had these two men to lead them up by the arms ; they had likewise left their mortal garments behind them in the river ; for though they went in with them, they came out without them. They therefore went up here with much agility and speed, though the foundation upon which the City was framed was higher than the clouds ; they therefore went up through the regions of the air, sweetly talking as they went, being comforted because they safely



got over the river, and had such glorious companions to attend them.

The talk that they had with the shining ones was about the glory of the place ; who told them that the beauty and glory of it was inexpressible. There, said they, is the Mount Sion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. You are going now, said they, to the paradise of God, wherein you shall see the tree of life, and eat of the never-fading fruits thereof : and when you come there you shall have white robes given you, and your walk and talk shall be every day with the King, even all the days of eternity. There you shall not see again such things as you saw when you were in the lower region upon the earth ; to wit, sorrow, sickness, affliction, and death ; For the former things are passed away.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now while they were thus drawing toward the gate, behold a company of the heavenly host came out to meet them ; to whom it was said by the other two shining ones, These are the men that have loved our Lord, when they were in the world, and that have left all for his holy name ; and he hath sent us to fetch them, and we have brought them thus far on their desired journey, that they may go in and look their Redeemer in the face with joy. Then the heavenly host gave a great shout, saying, Blessed are they that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb. There came out also at this time to meet them several of the King's trumpeters, clothed in white and shining raiment, who with melodious voices and loud made even the heavens to echo with their sound. Those trumpeters saluted Christian and his fellow with ten thousand welcomes from the world ; and this they did with shouting and sound of trumpet.

This done, they compassed them round on every side ; some went before, some behind, and some on the right hand, and some on the left, (as it were to guard them through the upper regions,) continually sounding as they went, with melodious noise, in notes on high : so that the very sight was to them that could behold it as if heaven itself was come down to meet them. Thus therefore they walked on together ; and, as they walked, ever and anon

these trumpeters, even with joyful sound, would, by mixing their music with looks and gestures, still signify to Christian and his brother how welcome they were into their company, and with what gladness they came to meet them. And now were these two men, as it were, in heaven, before they came at it, being swallowed up with the sight of angels, and with hearing their melodious notes. Here also they had the City itself in view; and they thought they heard all the bells therein to ring, to welcome them thereto. But, above all, the warm and joyful thoughts that they had about their own dwelling there with such company, and that for ever and ever, O, by what tongue or pen can their glorious joy be expressed!

### DRYDEN.

THE following ode is less famous than Alexander's Feast, but it is a poem of more meaning and beauty.

#### A SONG FOR ST. CECILIA'S DAY, 1687.

##### I.

From harmony, from heavenly harmony  
 This universal frame began;  
 When nature underneath a heap  
 Of jarring atoms lay,  
 And could not heave her head,  
 The tuneful voice was heard from high,  
 Arise, ye more than dead.  
 Then cold, and hot, and moist, and dry,  
 In order to their stations leap,  
 And Music's power obey.  
 From harmony, from heavenly harmony  
 This universal frame began:  
 From harmony to harmony  
 Through all the compass of the notes it ran,  
 The diapason closing full in Man.

##### II.

What passion cannot Music raise and quell?  
 When Jubal struck the corded shell,

His listening brethren stood around,  
And, wondering, on their faces fell  
To worship that celestial sound.  
Less than a God they thought there could not dwell  
Within the hollow of that shell,  
That spoke so sweetly and so well.  
What passion cannot Music raise and quell?

## III.

The trumpet's loud clangor  
Excites us to arms,  
With shrill notes of anger,  
And mortal alarms.  
The double double double beat  
Of the thundering drum  
Cries, hark! the foes come;  
Charge, Charge, 'tis too late to retreat.

## IV.

The soft complaining flute  
In dying notes discovers  
The woes of hopeless lovers,  
Whose dirge is whisper'd by the warbling lute.

## V.

Sharp violins proclaim  
Their jealous pangs, and desperation,  
Fury, frantic indignation,  
Depth of pains, and height of passion,  
For the fair, disdainful dame.

## VI.

But oh! what art can teach,  
What human voice can reach,  
The sacred organ's praise?  
Notes inspiring holy love,  
Notes that wing their heavenly ways  
To mend the choirs above.

VII.

Orpheus could lead the savage race;  
 And trees uprooted left their place,  
     Sequacious of the lyre:  
 But bright Cecilia rais'd the wonder higher:  
 When to her organ vocal breath was given,  
 An angel heard, and straight appear'd  
     Mistaking earth for heaven.

GRAND CHORUS.

As from the power of sacred lays  
     The spheres began to move,  
 And sung the great Creator's praise  
     To all the bless'd above;  
 So when the last and dreadful hour  
 This crumbling pageant shall devour,  
 The trumpet shall be heard on high,  
 The dead shall live, the living die,  
 And Music shall untune the sky.

The strength and ease of Dryden,

“The varying verse, the full-resounding line,  
 The long majestic march, and energy divine,”

are never more marked than in his translations. His versions are bold and free, careless of the letter and of the spirit of the original; but the flow and energy of the verse are undeniable.

The following passage from Virgil's *Æneid* will be familiar to many pupils who have read it in the original. The Trojans, on their way to Italy, are overtaken by a storm, which Æolus raises at the request of Juno.

Thus rag'd the goddess; and with fury fraught,  
 The restless regions of the storms she sought,  
 Where, in a spacious cave of living stone,  
 The tyrant Æolus, from his airy throne,

With pow'r imperial curbs the struggling winds,  
And sounding tempests in dark prisons binds.  
This way, and that, th' impatient captives tend,  
And, pressing for release, the mountains rend.  
High in his hall th' undaunted monarch stands,  
And shakes his sceptre, and their rage commands;  
Which did he not, their unresisted sway  
Would sweep the word before them in their way;  
Earth, air, and seas, through empty space would roll,  
And heav'n would fly before the driving soul.  
In fear of this, the father of the gods  
Confin'd their fury to those dark abodes,  
And lock'd them safe within, oppress'd with mountain loads;  
Impos'd a king with arbitrary sway,  
To loose their fetters, or their force allay;  
To whom the suppliant queen her pray'rs address'd,  
And thus the tenor of her suit express'd,  
"O, Æolus!—for to thee the king of heav'n  
The pow'r of tempests and of winds has giv'n;  
Thy force alone their fury can restrain,  
And smooth the waves, or swell the troubled main—  
A race of wand'ring slaves, abhorr'd by me,  
With prosp'rous passage cut the Tuscan sea:  
To fruitful Italy their course they steer,  
And, for their vanquish'd gods, design new temples there.  
Raise all thy winds, with night involve the skies;  
Sink or disperse my fatal enemies.  
Twice sev'n, the charming daughters of the main,  
'Around my person wait, and bear my train:'  
Succeed my wish, and second my design,  
The fairest, Deiopeia, shall be thine,  
And make thee father of a happy line."  
To this the god—"T is yours, O queen! to will  
The work, which duty binds me to fulfil.  
These airy kingdoms, and this wide command,  
Are all the presents of your bounteous hand:  
Yours is my sov'reign's grace; and, as your guest,  
I sit with gods at their celestial feast.  
Raise tempests at your pleasure, or subdue;  
Dispose of empire, which I hold from you."



He said, and hurl'd against the mountain side  
 His quiv'ring spear, and all the god applied.  
 The raging winds rush through the hollow wound,  
 And dance aloft in air, and skim along the ground;  
 Then settling on the sea, the surges sweep,  
 Raise liquid mountains, and disclose the deep;  
 South, east, and west, with mix'd confusion roar,  
 And roll the foaming billows to the shore.  
 The cables crack; the sailors' fearful cries  
 Ascend; and sable night involves the skies;  
 And heav'n itself is ravish'd from their eyes.  
 Loud peals of thunder from the poles ensue;  
 Then flashing fires the transient light renew,  
 The face of things a frightful image bears;  
 And present death in various forms appears.  
 Struck with unusual fright, the Trojan chief,  
 With lifted hands and eyes, invokes relief.

\* \* \* \* \*

Meantime imperial Neptune heard the sound  
 Of raging billows breaking on the ground.  
 Displeas'd, and fearing for his wat'ry reign,  
 He rear'd his awful head above the main  
 Serene in majesty,—then roll'd his eyes  
 Around the space of earth, and seas, and skies.  
 He saw the Trojan fleet dispers'd, distress'd,  
 By stormy winds and wint'ry heav'n oppress'd.  
 Full well the god his sister's envy knew,  
 And what her aims, and what her arts pursue.  
 He summon'd Eurys and the Western blast,  
 And first an angry glance on both he cast,  
 Then thus rebuk'd—"Audacious winds! from whence  
 This bold attempt, this rebel insolence!  
 Is it for you to ravage seas and land,  
 Unauthorized by my supreme command?  
 To raise such mountains on the troubled main?  
 Whom I—but first 't is fit the billows to restrain:  
 And then you shall be taught obedience to my reign.  
 Hence, to your lord my royal mandate bear—  
 The realms of ocean and the fields of air

Are mine, not his. By fatal lot to me  
 The liquid empire fell, and trident of the sea.  
 His pow'r to hollow caverns is confin'd:  
 There let him reign, the jailer of the wind;  
 With hoarse commands his breathing subjects call,  
 And boast and bluster in his empty hall."  
 He spoke and while he spoke he smooth'd the sea,  
 Dispell'd the darkness and restor'd the day.  
 Cymothoe, Triton, and the sea-green train  
 Of beauteous nymphs, the daughters of the main,  
 Clear from the rocks the vessels with their hands:  
 The god himself with ready trident stands,  
 And opes the deep, and spreads the moving sands;  
 Then heaves them off the shoals.—Where'er he guides  
 His finny coursers, and in triumph rides,  
 The waves unruffle, and the sea subsides.  
 As when in tumults rise th' ignoble crowd,  
 Mad are their motions, and their tongues are loud;  
 And stones and brands in rattling volleys fly,  
 And all the rustic arms that fury can supply;  
 If then some grave and pious man appear,  
 They hush their noise, and lend a list'ning ear:  
 He soothes with sober words their angry mood,  
 And quenches their innate desire of blood:  
 So, when the father of the flood appears,  
 And o'er the seas his sov'reign trident rears,  
 Their fury falls: he skims the liquid plains,  
 High on his chariot, and, with loosen'd reins,  
 Majestic moves along, and awful peace maintains.

On page 100 mention was made of the merits of Dryden's prose. The following extracts are from the preface to his modernized versions of Chaucer. He declares that Chaucer's language "is so obsolete that his sense is scarce to be understood," and announces his intention of "turning some of the Canterbury Tales into our language, as it is now refined." The wonder is, in Dryden's age, not that he thought Chaucer obsolete, but that he was bold enough to attempt a revival of interest in Chaucer's poetry and

to stamp it with his own high approval. His admiration is hearty, and is expressed in manly English that has the ease and energy of good talk. We may often disagree with Dryden's views, but his way of putting them is suggestive and agreeable.

In the first place, as he is the father of English poetry, so I hold him in the same degree of veneration as the Grecians held Homer or the Romans Virgil : he is a perpetual fountain of good sense, learned in all sciences, and therefore speaks properly on all subjects : as he knew what to say, so he knows also when to leave off, a continence which is practised by few writers, and scarcely by any of the ancients, excepting Virgil and Horace.

Chaucer followed nature everywhere, but was never so bold to go beyond her; and there is a great difference of being Poeta and nimis Poeta, if we believe Catullus, as much as betwixt a modest behaviour and affectation. The verse of Chaucer, I confess, is not harmonious to us; they who lived with him, and some time after him, thought it musical; and it continues so even in our judgment, if compared with the numbers of Lidgate and Gower, his contemporaries : there is the rude sweetness of a Scotch tune in it, which is natural and pleasing, though not perfect. It is true, I cannot go so far as he who published the last edition of him; for he would make us believe the fault is in our ears, and that there were really ten syllables in a verse where we find but nine : but this opinion is not worth confuting.

We can only say, that he lived in the infancy of our poetry, and that nothing is brought to perfection at the first. We must be children before we grow men. There was an Ennius, and in process of time a Lucilius, and a Lucretius, before Virgil and Horace; even after Chaucer there was a Spenser, a Harrington, a Fairfax, before Waller and Denham were in being : and our numbers were in their nonage till these last appeared.

As for the religion of our poet, he seems to have some little bias towards the opinions of Wickliff, after John of Gaunt his

patron ; somewhat of which appears in the tale of *Piers Plowman*: yet I cannot blame him for inveighing so sharply against the vices of the clergy in his age ; their pride, their ambition, their pomp, their avarice, their worldly interest, deserved the lashes which he gave them, both in that and in most of his *Canterbury tales*: neither has his contemporary *Boccace* spared them. Yet both these poets lived in much esteem with good and holy men in orders ; for the scandal which is given by particular priests, reflects not on the sacred function. Chaucer's Monk, his Chanon, and his Fryer, took not from the character of his Good Parson. A satyrical poet is the check of the laymen on bad priests.

In the mean while, I take up Chaucer where I left him. He must have been a man of a most wonderful comprehensive nature, because, as it has been truly observed of him, he has taken into the compass of his *Canterbury tales* the various manners and humours (as we now call them) of the whole English nation, in his age. Not a single character has escaped him. All his pilgrims are severally distinguished from each other; and not only in their inclinations, but in their very physiognomies and persons. *Baptista Porta* could not have described their natures better, than by the marks which the poet gives them. The matter and manner of their tales, and of their telling, are so suited to their different educations, humours, and callings, that each of them would be improper in any other mouth. Even the grave and serious characters are distinguished by their several sorts of gravity: their discourses are such as belong to their age, their calling, and their breeding ; such as are becoming of them, and of them only. Some of his persons are vicious, and some virtuous ; some are unlearned, or (as Chaucer calls them) lewd, and some are learned. Even the ribaldry of the low characters is different: the Reeve, the Miller, and the Cook, are several men, and distinguished from each other, as much as the mincing lady prioress, and the broad-speaking gap-toothed wife of Bath. But enough of this: there is such a variety of game springing up before me, that I am distracted in my choice, and know not which to follow. 'Tis sufficient to say, according to the proverb, that here is God's plenty. We have our forefathers and great gran-

dames all before us, as they were in Chaucer's days; their general characters are still remaining in mankind, and even in England, though they are called by other names than those of Monks and Friars, and Chanons, and lady Abbesses, and Nuns: for mankind is ever the same, and nothing lost out of nature, though every thing is altered.

I have almost done with Chaucer, when I have answered some objections relating to my present work. I find some people are offended that I have turned these tales into modern English; because they think them unworthy of my pains, and look on Chaucer as a dry, old-fashioned wit, not worth reviving. I have often heard the late Earl of Leicester say, that Mr. Cowley himself was of that opinion; who having read him over at my lord's request, declared he had no taste of him. I dare not advance my opinion against the judgement of so great an author; but I think it fair, however, to leave the decision to the public: Mr. Cowley was too modest to set up for a dictator; and being shocked perhaps with his old style, never examined into the depth of his good sense. Chaucer, I confess, is a rough diamond, and must first be polished, ere he shines. I deny not, likewise, that, living in our early days of poetry, he writes not always of a piece; but sometimes mingles trivial things with those of greater moment. Sometimes, also, though not often, he runs riot, like Ovid, and knows not when he has said enough. But there are more great wits besides Chaucer, whose fault is their excess of conceits, and those ill sorted. An author is not to write all he can, but only all he ought. Having observed this redundancy in Chaucer, (as it is an easy matter for a man of ordinary parts to find a fault in one of greater,) I have not tied myself to a literal translation; but have often omitted what I judged unnecessary, or not of dignity enough to appear in the company of better thoughts. I have presumed farther, in some places, and added somewhat of my own where I thought my author was deficient, and had not given his thoughts their true lustre, for want of words in the beginning of our language. And to this I was the more emboldened, because (if I may be permitted to say it of myself) I found I had a soul congenial to his, and that I had been conversant in the same studies. Another poet, in another age, may take the same liberty with



my writings ; if at least they live long enough to deserve correction.

The following passage of Dryden is from his *Essay of Dramatick Poesie*, which Dr. Johnson called “the first regular and valuable treatise on the art of writing,” as he calls Dryden “the father of English criticism.” The estimate of Shakespeare here given is praised highly by Johnson, who declares it “a perpetual model of encomiastick criticism,” and further says that admirers of Shakespeare have hardly done much more than diffuse and paraphrase “this epitome of excellence.”

To begin then with Shakespeare ; he was the man, who of all modern, and perhaps ancient poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul. All the images of nature were still present to him, and he drew them not laboriously, but luckily. When he describes anything, you more than see it, you feel it too. Those who accuse him to have wanted learning, give him the greater commendation. He was naturally learned; he needed not the spectacles of books to read nature: he looked inwards and found her there. I cannot say he is everywhere alike; were he so, I should do him injury to compare him with the greatest of mankind. He is many times flat, insipid; his comick wit degenerating into clenches, his serious swelling into bombast. But he is always great, when some great occasion is presented to him : no man can say he ever had a fit subject for his wit, and did not then raise himself high above the rest of poets. The consideration of this made Mr. Hales of Eaton say, that there was no subject of which any poet ever writ, but he would produce it much better treated of in Shakespeare ; and however others are now generally preferred before him, yet the age wherein he lived, which had contemporaries with him. Fletcher and Johnson, never equalled them to him in their esteem; and in the last king’s court, when Ben’s reputation was at highest, Sir John Suckling, and with him the greater part of the courtiers, set our Shakespeare above him.

## POPE.

THE qualities of Pope that have been mentioned, are most of them illustrated in his famous Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot. He complains here loudly of the bores who intrude upon his privacy at Twickenham.

Is there a parson, much bemused in beer,  
A maudlin poetess, a rhyming peer,  
A clerk, foredoomed his father's soul to cross,  
Who pens a stanza, when he should engross?  
Is there, who, locked from ink and paper, scrawls  
With desperate charcoal round his darkened walls?  
All fly to TWIT'NAM, and in humble strain  
Apply to me, to keep them mad or vain.

Friend to my life! (which did not you prolong,  
The world had wanted many an idle song),  
What drop or nostrum can this plague remove?  
Or which must end me, a fool's wrath or love?  
A dire dilemma! either way I'm sped,  
If foes, they write,—if friends, they read me dead.  
Seized and tied down to judge, how wretched I!  
Who can't be silent, and who will not lie:  
To laugh, were want of goodness and of grace,  
And to be grave, exceeds all power of face.  
I sit with sad civility, I read  
With honest anguish, and an aching head;  
And drop at last, but in unwilling ears,  
This saving counsel—"Keep your peace nine years."

"Nine years!" cries he, who, high in Drury Lane,  
Lulled by soft zephyrs through the broken pane,  
Rhymes ere he wakes, and prints before Term ends,  
Obliged by hunger and request of friends:  
"The piece, you think, is incorrect? Why, take it;  
I'm all submission, what you'd have it, make it."

Three things another's modest wishes bound,  
My friendship, and a prologue, and ten pound.

Pitholeon sends to me: "You know his Grace,  
 I want a patron; ask him for a place."  
 Pitholeon libelled me—"but here's a letter  
 Informs you, sir, 'twas when he knew no better.  
 Dare you refuse him? Curll invites to dine,  
 He'll write a journal, or he'll turn divine."  
 Bless me! a packet. "'Tis a stranger sues,  
 A virgin tragedy, an orphan Muse."  
 If I dislike it, "Furies, death, and rage!"  
 If I approve, "Commend it to the stage."  
 There (thank my stars) my whole commission ends,  
 The players and I are, luckily, no friends.  
 Fired that the house reject him, "'Sdeath, I'll print it,  
 And shame the fools—Your interest, sir, with Lintot."  
 Lintot, dull rogue! will think your price too much:  
 "Not, sir, if you revise it, and retouch."  
 All my demurs but double his attacks;  
 At last he whispers, "Do; and we go snacks."  
 Glad of a quarrel, straight I clap the door:  
 "Sir, let me see your works and you no more."

\* \* \* \* \*

You think this cruel? take it for a rule,  
 No creature smarts so little as a fool.  
 Let peals of laughter, Codrus! round thee break,  
 Thou unconcerned canst hear the mighty crack:  
 Pit, box, and gallery in convulsions hurled,  
 Thou stand'st unshook amidst a bursting world.  
 Who shames a scribbler? break one cobweb through,  
 He spins the slight, self-pleasing thread anew:  
 Destroy his fib, or sophistry—in vain!  
 The creature's at his dirty work again,  
 Throned in the centre of his thin designs,  
 Proud of a vast extent of flimsy lines!

Pope's moral essays are satires upon the society of his own age, and are among the wittiest of his productions. In the passage quoted, we find that vulgar magnificence was not unknown even in the days of good Queen Anne.

At Timon's villa let us pass a day,  
 Where all cry out, "What sums are thrown away!"  
 So proud, so grand: of that stupendous air,  
 Soft and agreeable come never there.  
 Greatness with Timon, dwells in such a draught  
 As brings all Brobdignag before your thought.  
 To compass this, his building is a town,  
 His pond an ocean, his parterre a down:  
 Who but must laugh, the master when he sees,  
 A puny insect, shivering at a breeze!  
 Lo, what huge heaps of littleness around!  
 The whole, a laboured quarry above ground.  
 Two cupids squirt before: a lake behind  
 Improves the keenness of the northern wind.  
 His gardens next your admiration call,  
 On every side you look, behold the wall!  
 No pleasing intricacies intervene,  
 No artful wildness to perplex the scene:  
 Grove nods at grove, each valley has a brother,  
 And half the platform just reflects the other.  
 The suffering eye inverted Nature sees,  
 Trees cut to statues, statues thick as trees;  
 With here a fountain, never to be played;  
 And there a summer-house, that knows no shade;  
 Here Amphitrite sails through myrtle bowers;  
 There gladiators fight, or die, in flowers;  
 Unwatered see the drooping sea-horse mourn,  
 And swallows roost in Nilus' dusty urn.

My lord advances with majestic mien,  
 Smit with the mighty pleasure to be seen:  
 But soft—by regular approach—not yet—  
 First through the length of yon hot terrace sweat:  
 And when up ten steep slopes you've dragged your thighs,  
 Just at his study-door he'll bless your eyes.

His study! with what authors is it stored?  
 In books, not authors, curious is my Lord;  
 To all their dated backs he turns you round;  
 These Aldus printed, those Du'Sueil has bound.  
 Lo, some are vellum, and the rest as good  
 For all his lordship knows, but they are wood.

For Locke or Milton 'tis in vain to look,  
These shelves admit not any modern book.

And now the chapel's silver bell you hear,  
That summons you to all the pride of prayer:  
Light quirks of music, broken and uneven,  
Make the soul dance upon a jig to Heaven.  
On painted ceilings you devoutly stare,  
Where sprawl the saints of Verrio or Laguerre,  
On gilded clouds in fair expansion lie,  
And bring all Paradise before your eye.  
To rest, the cushion and soft dean invite,  
Who never mentions hell to ears polite.

But hark! the chiming clocks to dinner call;  
A hundred footsteps scrape the marble hall:  
The rich buffet well-coloured serpents grace,  
And gaping Tritons spew to wash your face.  
Is this a dinner? this a genial room?  
No, 'tis a temple, and a hecatomb.  
A solemn sacrifice, performed in state,  
You drink by measure, and to minutes eat.  
So quick retires each flying course, you'd swear  
Sancho's dread doctor and his wand were there.  
Between each act the trembling salvers ring,  
From soup to sweet-wine, and God bless the king.  
In plenty starving, tantalised in state,  
And complaisantly helped to all I hate,  
Treated, caressed, and tired, I take my leave,  
Sick of his civil pride from morn to eve;  
I curse such lavish cost, and little skill,  
And swear no day was ever passed so ill.

*Moral Essays, Epistle IV.*

Many interesting literary opinions are to be found in the *Epistle to Augustus*, a poem under that name addressed to George II.

If time improve our wits as well as wine,  
Say at what age a poet grows divine?  
Shall we, or shall we not, account him so,  
Who died, perhaps, a hundred years ago?  
End all dispute; and fix the year precise  
When British bards begin to immortalize?



“Who lasts a century can have no flaw,  
I hold that wit a classic, good in law.”

\* \* \* \* \*

Shakespeare (whom you and every play-house bill  
Style the divine, the matchless, what you will)  
For gain, not glory, winged his roving flight,  
And grew immortal in his own despite.  
Ben, old and poor, as little seemed to heed  
The life to come in every poet's creed.  
Who now reads Cowley? if he pleases yet,  
His moral pleases, not his pointed wit;  
Forgot his epic, nay Pindaric art,  
But still I love the language of his heart.  
“Yet surely, surely, these were famous men!  
What boy but hears the sayings of old Ben?  
In all debates where critics bear a part,  
Not one but nods, and talks of Jonson's art,  
Of Shakspeare's nature, and of Cowley's wit;  
How Beaumont's judgment checked what Fletcher writ;  
How Shadwell hasty, Wycherley was slow;  
But, for the passions, Southern sure and Rowe.  
These, only these, support the crowded stage,  
From eldest Heywood down to Cibber's age.”

All this may be; the people's voice is odd,  
It is, and it is not, the voice of God.  
To Gammer Gurton if it give the bays,  
And yet deny the Careless Husband praise,  
Or say our fathers never broke a rule;  
Why then, I say, the public is a fool.  
But let them own that greater faults than we  
They had, and greater virtues, I'll agree.  
Spenser himself affects the obsolete,  
And Sidney's verse halts ill on Roman feet;  
Milton's strong pinion now not Heaven can bound,  
Now, serpent-like, in prose he sweeps the ground;  
In quibbles, angel and archangel join,  
And God the Father turns a school-divine.  
Not that I'd lop the beauties from his book,  
Like slashing Bentley with his desperate hook,  
Or damn all Shakespeare, like the affected fool  
At Court, who hates whate'er he read at school.

But for the wits of either Charles's days,  
 The mob of gentlemen who wrote with ease;  
 Sprat, Carew, Sedley, and a hundred more  
 (Like twinkling stars the Miscellanies o'er)  
 One simile, that solitary shines  
 In the dry desert of a thousand lines,  
 Or lengthened thought that gleams through many a page,  
 Has sanctified whole poems for an age.  
 I lose my patience, and I own it too,  
 When works are censured not as bad but new;  
 While if our elders break all reason's laws,  
 These fools demand not pardon, but applause.

On Avon's bank, where flowers eternal blow,  
 If I but ask if any weed can grow;  
 One tragic sentence if I dare deride,  
 Which Betterton's grave action dignified,  
 Or well-mouthed Booth with emphasis proclaims,  
 (Though but perhaps a muster-roll of names)  
 How will our fathers rise up in a rage,  
 And swear all shame is lost in George's age!  
 You'd think no fools disgraced the former reign,  
 Did not some grave examples yet remain,  
 Who scorn a lad should teach his father skill,  
 And, having once been wrong, will be so still.  
 He, who to seem more deep than you or I,  
 Extols old bards, or Merlin's prophecy,  
 Mistake him not; he envies, not admires,  
 And to debase the sons, exalts the sires.  
 Had ancient times conspired to disallow  
 What then was new, what had been ancient now?  
 Or what remained, so worthy to be read  
 By learned critics, of the mighty dead?

\* \* \* \* \*

Time was, a sober Englishman would knock  
 His servants up, and rise by five o'clock;  
 Instruct his family in every rule,  
 And send his wife to church, his son to school.  
 To worship like his fathers was his care,  
 To teach their frugal virtues to his heir:  
 To prove that luxury could never hold;  
 And place, on good security, his gold.

Now times are changed, and one poetic itch  
 Has seized the Court and city, poor and rich :  
 Sons, sires, and grandsires, all will wear the bays,  
 Our wives read Milton, and our daughters plays,  
 To theatres and to rehearsals throng,  
 And all our grace at table is a song.

The last selection is from *The Essay on Man*.

Heav'n forming each on other to depend,  
 A master, or a servant, or a friend,  
 Bids each on other for assistance call,  
 Till one man's weakness grows the strength of all.  
 Wants, frailties, passions, closer still ally  
 The common int'rest, or endear the tie.  
 To these we owe true friendship, love sincere,  
 Each home-felt joy that life inherits here ;  
 Yet from the same we learn, in its decline,  
 Those joys, those loves, those int'rests to resign :  
 Taught half by reason, half by mere decay,  
 To welcome death, and calmly pass away.

Whate'er the passion,—knowledge, fame, or pelf,—  
 Not one will change his neighbour with himself.  
 The learn'd is happy nature to explore,  
 The fool is happy that he knows no more ;  
 The rich is happy in the plenty giv'n,  
 The poor contents him with the care of heav'n.  
 See the blind beggar dance, the cripple sing,  
 The sot a hero, lunatic a king ;  
 The starving chemist in his golden views  
 Supremely blessed, the poet in his muse.

See some strange comfort ev'ry state attend,  
 And pride bestowed on all, a common friend :  
 See some fit passion ev'ry age supply,  
 Hope travels through, nor quits us when we die.

Behold the child, by nature's kindly law  
 Pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw :  
 Some livelier plaything gives his youth delight,  
 A little louder, but as empty quite :  
 Scarfs, garters, gold, amuse his riper stage,  
 And beads and pray'r-books are the toys of age :

Pleased with this bauble still, as that before;  
Till tired he sleeps, and life's poor play is o'er.

Meanwhile opinion gilds with varying rays  
Those painted clouds that beautify our days;  
Each want of happiness by hope supplied,  
And each vacuity of sense by pride:  
These build as fast as knowledge can destroy;  
In folly's cup still laughs the bubble, joy;  
One prospect lost, another still we gain;  
And not a vanity is giv'n in vain;  
Ev'n mean self-love becomes, by force divine,  
The scale to measure others' wants by thine.  
See, and confess, one comfort still must rise;  
'Tis this, though man's a fool, yet God is wise!

### ADDISON.

Two numbers of *The Spectator* are given which illustrate Addison's gentle satire, his grace and simplicity of style, and his sweetness of spirit. He was fond of quoting the Latin poets, and begins this paper with a long extract from a famous satire of Horace. In this poem Addison had found the suggestion of his essay:

Whence is't, Mæcenas, that so few approve  
The state they're plac'd in, and incline to rove

#### NO. 558. WEDNESDAY, JUNE 23, 1714.

It is a celebrated thought of Socrates, that if all the misfortunes of mankind were cast into a public stock, in order to be equally distributed among the whole species, those who now think themselves the most unhappy would prefer the share they are already possessed of before that which would fall to them by such a division. Horace has carried this thought a great deal further in the motto of my paper, which implies, that the hardships or misfortunes we lie under are more easy to us than those of any other person would be, in case we could change conditions with him.

As I was ruminating upon these two remarks, and seated in my elbow-chair, I insensibly fell asleep ; when on a sudden methought there was a proclamation made by Jupiter, that every mortal should bring in his griefs and calamities, and throw them together in a heap. There was a large plain appointed for this purpose. I took my stand in the centre of it, and saw with a great deal of pleasure the whole human species marching one after another, and throwing down their several loads, which immediately grew up into a prodigious mountain, that seemed to rise above the clouds.

There was a certain lady of a thin airy shape, who was very active in this solemnity. She carried a magnifying-glass in one of her hands, and was clothed in a loose flowing robe, embroidered with several figures of fiends and spectres, that discovered themselves in a thousand chimerical shapes as her garment hovered in the wind. There was something wild and distracted in her looks. Her name was Fancy. She led up every mortal to the appointed place, after having very officiously assisted him in making up his pack, and laying it upon his shoulders. My heart melted within me to see my fellow-creatures groaning under their respective burdens, and to consider that prodigious bulk of human calamities which lay before me.

There were, however, several persons who gave me great diversion upon this occasion. I observed one bringing in a fardel very carefully concealed under an old embroidered cloak, which, upon his throwing into the heap, I discovered to be Poverty. Another, after a great deal of puffing, threw down his luggage, which, upon examining, I found to be his wife.

There were multitudes of lovers saddled with very whimsical burdens composed of darts and flames ; but, what was very odd, though they sighed as if their hearts would break under these bundles of calamities, they could not persuade themselves to cast them into the heap, when they came up to it ; but, after a few faint efforts, shook their heads, and marched away as heavy loaden as they came. I saw multitudes of old women throw down their wrinkles, and several young ones who stripped themselves of a tawny skin. There were very great heaps of red noses, large lips, and rusty teeth. The truth of it is, I was surprised to



see the greatest part of the mountain made up of bodily deformities. Observing one advancing towards the heap with a larger cargo than ordinary upon his back, I found upon his near approach that it was only a natural hump, which he disposed of with great joy of heart among this collection of human miseries. There were likewise distempers of all sorts; though I could not but observe, that there were many more imaginary than real. One little packet I could not but take notice of, which was a complication of all the diseases incident to human nature, and was in the hand of a great many fine people; this was called the spleen. But what most of all surprised me, was a remark I made, that there was not a single vice or folly thrown into the whole heap; at which I was very much astonished, having concluded with myself that every one would take this opportunity of getting rid of his passions, prejudices, and frailties.

I took notice in particular of a very profligate fellow, who I did not question came laden with his crimes; but upon searching into his bundle, I found that, instead of throwing his guilt from him, he had only laid down his memory. He was followed by another worthless rogue, who flung away his modesty instead of his ignorance.

When the whole race of mankind had thus cast their burdens, the phantom which had been so busy on this occasion, seeing me an idle Spectator of what had passed, approached towards me. I grew uneasy at her presence, when of a sudden she held her magnifying-glass full before my eyes. I no sooner saw my face in it, but I was startled at the shortness of it, which now appeared to me in its utmost aggravation. The immoderate breadth of the features made me very much out of humour with my own countenance, upon which I threw it from me like a mask. It happened very luckily that one who stood by me had just before thrown down his visage, which it seems was too long for him. It was indeed extended to a most shameful length; I believe the very chin was, modestly speaking, as long as my whole face. We had both of us an opportunity of mending ourselves; and all the contributions being now brought in, every man was at liberty to exchange his misfortunes for those of another person. But as there arose many new incidents in the sequel of my vision, I shall reserve them for the subject of my next paper.

## No. 559. FRIDAY, JUNE 25, 1714.

In my last paper, I gave my reader a sight of that mountain of miseries which was made up of those several calamities that afflict the minds of men. I saw with unspeakable pleasure the whole species thus delivered from its sorrows ; though at the same time, as we stood round the heap, and surveyed the several materials of which it was composed, there was scarcely a mortal in this vast multitude, who did not discover what he thought pleasures and blessings of life, and wondered how the owners of them ever came to look upon them as burdens and grievances.

As we were regarding very attentively this confusion of miseries, this chaos of calamity, Jupiter issued out a second proclamation, that every one was now at liberty to exchange his affliction, and to return to his habitation with any such other bundle as should be delivered to him.

Upon this, Fancy began again to bestir herself, and, parcelling out the whole heap with incredible activity, recommended to every one his particular packet. The hurry and confusion at this time was not to be expressed. Some observations which I made upon the occasion I shall communicate to the public. A venerable gray-headed man, who had laid down the cholic, and who I found wanted an heir to his estate, snatched up an undutiful son that had been thrown into the heap by his angry father. The graceless youth, in less than a quarter of an hour, pulled the old gentleman by the beard, and had like to have knocked his brains out ; so that meeting the true father, who came towards him with a fit of the gripes, he begged him to take his son again, and give him back his cholic ; but they were incapable either of them to recede from the choice they had made. A poor galley-slave, who had thrown down his chains, took up the gout in their stead, but made such wry faces, that one might easily perceive he was no great gainer by the bargain. It was pleasant enough to see the several exchanges that were made for sickness against poverty, hunger against want of appetite, and care against pain.

The female world were very busy among themselves in bartering for features : one was trucking a lock of gray hairs for a carbuncle, another was making over a short waist for a pair of round

shoulders, and a third cheapening a bad face for a lost reputation: but on all these occasions there was not one of them who did not think the new blemish, as soon as she had got it into her possession, much more disagreeable than the old one. I made the same observation on every other misfortune or calamity which every one in the assembly brought upon himself in lieu of what he had parted with: whether it be that all the evils which befall us are in some measure suited and proportioned to our strength, or that every evil becomes more supportable by our being accustomed to it, I shall not determine.

I could not from my heart forbear pitying the poor hump-backed gentleman mentioned in the former paper, who went off a very well-shaped person with a stone in his bladder; nor the fine gentleman who had struck up this bargain with him, that limped through a whole assembly of ladies, who used to admire him, with a pair of shoulders peeping over his head.

I must not omit my own particular adventure. My friend with a long visage had no sooner taken upon him my short face, but he made such a grotesque figure in it, that as I looked upon him I could not forbear laughing at myself, insomuch that I put my own face out of countenance. The poor gentleman was so sensible of the ridicule, that I found he was ashamed of what he had done: on the other side, I found that I myself had no great reason to triumph, for as I went to touch my forehead I missed the place, and clapped my finger upon my upper lip. Besides, as my nose was exceeding prominent, I gave it two or three unlucky knocks as I was playing my hand about my face, and aiming at some other part of it. I saw two other gentlemen by me who were in the same ridiculous circumstances. These had made a foolish swop between a couple of thick bandy legs and two long trapsticks that had no calves to them. One of these looked like a man walking upon stilts, and was so lifted up into the air, above his ordinary height, that his head turned round with it; while the other made such awkward circles, as he attempted to walk, that he scarce knew how to move forward upon his new supporters. Observing him to be a pleasant kind of fellow, I stuck my cane in the ground, and told him I would lay him a bottle of wine that he did not march up to it, on a line that I drew for him, in a quarter of an hour.

The heap was at last distributed among the two sexes, who made a most piteous sight, as they wandered up and down under the pressure of their several burdens. The whole plain was filled with murmurs and complaints, groans, and lamentations. Jupiter at length taking compassion on the poor mortals, ordered them a second time to lay down their loads, with a design to give every one his own again. They discharged themselves with a great deal of pleasure : after which, the phantom who had led them into such gross delusions was commanded to disappear. There was sent in her stead a goddess of a quite different figure : her motions were steady and composed, and her aspect serious, but cheerful. She every now and then cast her eyes towards heaven, and fixed them upon Jupiter : her name was Patience. She had no sooner placed herself by the Mount of Sorrows, but, what I thought very remarkable, the whole heap sunk to such a degree, that it did not appear a third part so big as it was before. She afterwards returned every man his own proper calamity, and teaching him how to bear it in the most commodious manner, he marched off with it contentedly, being very well pleased that he had not been left to his own choice as to the kind of evils which fell to his lot.

Besides the several pieces of morality to be drawn out of this vision, I learnt from it never to repine at my own misfortunes, or to envy the happiness of another, since it is impossible for any man to form a right judgment of his neighbour's sufferings ; for which reason also I have determined never to think too lightly of another's complaints, but to regard the sorrows of my fellow-creatures with sentiments of humanity and compassion.

## S W I F T .

THE following selection from *Gulliver's Travels* describes an adventure of Gulliver among the Lilliputians, and also gives some account of the politics of Lilliput. The contents of the chapter are, in Swift's own words, as follows : " A conversation between the author and a principal secretary, concerning the affairs of that empire. The author's

offer to serve the emperor in his wars. The author, by an extraordinary stratagem, prevents an invasion." The pupil should consider three things: whether the story is well told; what more than the story Swift meant to convey; and whether this passage illustrates his style as described on page 132.

One morning, Reldresal, principal secretary (as they style him) for private affairs, came to my house attended only by one servant. He ordered his coach to wait at a distance, and desired I would give him an hour's audience; which I readily consented to, on account of his quality and personal merits, as well as of the many good offices he had done me during my solicitations at court. I offered to lie down, that he might the more conveniently reach my ear; but he chose rather to let me hold him in my hand during our conversation. He began with compliments on my liberty; said, "he might pretend to some merit in it;" but however added, "that if it had not been for the present situation of things at court, perhaps I might not have obtained it so soon. For," said he, "as flourishing a condition as we may appear to be in to foreigners, we labour under two mighty evils; a violent faction at home, and the danger of an invasion, by a most potent enemy, from abroad. As to the first, you are to understand that for above seventy moons past there have been two struggling parties in this empire, under the names of *Tramecksan* and *Slamecksan*, from the high and low heels of their shoes, by which they distinguish themselves. It is alleged, indeed, that the high heels are most agreeable to our ancient constitution; but, however this be, his majesty has determined to make use only of low heels in the administration of the government, and all offices in the gift of the crown, as you cannot but observe; and particularly, that his majesty's imperial heels are lower at least by a *drurr* than any of his court: *drurr* is a measure about the fourteenth part of an inch. The animosities between these two parties run so high, that they will neither eat, nor drink, nor talk with each other. We compute the *Tramecksan*, or high heels, to exceed us in number; but the power is wholly on our side. We apprehend his imperial highness, the



heir to the crown, to have some tendency towards the high heels ; at least, we can plainly discover that one of his heels is higher than the other, which gives him a hobble in his gait. Now, in the midst of these intestine disquiets, we are threatened with an invasion from the island of Blefuscu, which is the other great empire of the universe, almost as large and powerful as this of his majesty. For, as to what we have heard you affirm, that there are other kingdoms and states in the world, inhabited by human creatures as large as yourself, our philosophers are in much doubt, and would rather conjecture that you dropped from the moon, or one of the stars ; because it is certain that a hundred mortals of your bulk would in a short time destroy all the fruits and cattle of his majesty's dominions : besides, our histories of six thousand moons make no mention of any other regions than the two great empires of Lilliput and Blefuscu. Which two mighty powers have, as I was going to tell you, been engaged in a most obstinate war for six-and-thirty moons past. It began upon the following occasion : it is allowed on all hands that the primitive way of breaking eggs, before we eat them, was upon the larger end ; but his present majesty's grandfather, while he was a boy, going to eat an egg, and breaking it according to the ancient practice, happened to cut one of his fingers. Whereupon, the emperor his father published an edict, commanding all his subjects, upon great penalties, to break the smaller end of their eggs. The people so highly resented this law, that our histories tell us there have been six rebellions raised on that account ; wherein one emperor lost his life, and another his crown. These civil commotions were constantly fomented by the monarchs of Blefuscu ; and when they were quelled, the exiles always fled for refuge to that empire. It is computed that eleven thousand persons have at several times suffered death, rather than submit to break their eggs at the smaller end. Many hundred large volumes have been published upon this controversy : but the books of the Big-endians have been long forbidden, and the whole party rendered incapable by law of holding employments. During the course of these troubles, the emperors of Blefuscu did frequently expostulate by their ambassadors, accusing us of making a schism in religion, by offending against a fundamental doctrine of our great prophet Lustrog, in the fifty-fourth chapter of the Blun-

decal, which is their Alcoran. This, however, is thought to be a mere strain upon the text ; for the words are these : that all true believers break their eggs at the convenient end. And which is the convenient end seems, in my humble opinion, to be left to every man's conscience, or at least in the power of the chief magistrate to determine. Now, the Big-endian exiles have found so much credit in the emperor of Blefuscu's court, and so much private assistance and encouragement from their party here at home, that a bloody war had been carried on between the two empires for six-and-thirty moons, with various success : during which time we have lost forty capital ships and a much greater number of smaller vessels, together with thirty thousand of our best seamen and soldiers ; and the damage received by the enemy is reckoned to be somewhat greater than ours. However, they have now equipped a numerous fleet, and are just preparing to make a descent upon us ; and his imperial majesty, placing great confidence in your valour and strength, has commanded me to lay this account of his affairs before you."

I desired the secretary to present my humble duty to the emperor ; and to let him know, " that I thought it would not become me, who was a foreigner, to interfere with parties ; but I was ready, with the hazard of my life, to defend his person and state against all invaders."

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The empire of Blefuscu is an island situated to the north-east of Lilliput, from which it is parted only by a channel of eight hundred yards wide. I had not yet seen it, and upon this notice of an intended invasion, I avoided appearing on that side of the coast, for fear of being discovered by some of the enemy's ships, who had received no intelligence of me ; all intercourse between the two empires having been strictly forbidden during the war, upon pain of death, and an embargo laid by our emperor upon all vessels whatsoever. I communicated to his majesty a project I had formed of seizing the enemy's whole fleet ; which, as our scouts assured us, lay at anchor in the harbour, ready to sail with the first fair wind. I consulted the most experienced seamen upon the depth of the channel, which they had often plumbed ; who told me that in the middle at high water it was seventy *glumgluffs* deep, which is about six feet of European measure ;

and the rest of it fifty *glumgluffs* at most. I walked toward the north-east coast, over against Blefuscu, where, lying down behind a hillock, I took out my small perspective glass, and viewed the enemy's fleet at anchor, consisting of about fifty men-of-war, and a great number of transports : I then came back to my house, and gave orders (for which I had a warrant) for a great quantity of the strongest cable and bars of iron. The cable was about as thick as packthread, and the bars of the length and size of a knitting-needle. I trebled the cable to make it stronger, and for the same reason I twisted three of the iron bars together, bending the extremities into a hook. Having thus fixed fifty hooks to as many cables, I went back to the north-east coast, and, putting off my coat, shoes, and stockings, walked into the sea, in my leathern jerkin, about half an hour before high water. I waded with what haste I could, and swam in the middle about thirty yards, till I felt ground. I arrived at the fleet in less than half an hour. The enemy was so frightened when they saw me, that they leaped out of their ships, and swam to shore, where there could not be fewer than thirty thousand souls : I then took my tackling, and, fastening a hook to the hole at the prow of each, I tied all the cords together at the end. While I was thus employed, the enemy discharged several thousand arrows, many of which stuck in my hands and face ; and, besides the excessive smart, gave me much disturbance in my work. My greatest apprehension was for mine eyes, which I should have infallibly lost if I had not suddenly thought of an expedient. I kept, among other little necessities, a pair of spectacles in a private pocket, which, as I observed before, had escaped the emperor's searchers. These I took out, and fastened as strongly as I could upon my nose, and thus armed, went on boldly with my work, in spite of the enemy's arrows ; many of which struck against the glasses of my spectacles, but without any other effect, farther than a little to discompose them. I had now fastened all the hooks, and, taking the knot in my hand, began to pull ; but not a ship would stir, for they were all too fast held by their anchors, so that the boldest part of my enterprise remained. I therefore let go the cord, and, leaving the hooks fixed to the ships, I resolutely cut with my knife the cables that fastened the anchors, receiving about two hundred shots in my face and hands ; then I took up

the knotted end of the cables, to which my hooks were tied, and with great ease drew fifty of the enemy's largest men-of-war after me.

The Blefuscudians, who had not the least imagination of what I intended, were at first confounded with astonishment. They had seen me cut the cables, and thought my design was only to let the ships run adrift, or fall foul on each other; but when they perceived the whole fleet moving in order, and saw me pulling at the end, they set up such a scream of grief and despair as it is almost impossible to describe or conceive. When I had got out of danger, I stopped awhile to pick out the arrows that stuck in my hands and face; and rubbed on some of the same ointment that was given me at my first arrival, as I formerly mentioned. I then took off my spectacles, and, waiting about an hour, till the tide was a little fallen, I waded through the middle with my cargo, and arrived safe at the royal port of Lilliput.

The emperor and his whole court stood on the shore, expecting the issue of this great adventure. They saw the ships move forward in a large half-moon, but could not discern me, who was up to my breast in water. When I advanced to the middle of the channel they were yet more in pain, because I was under water to my neck. The emperor concluded me to be drowned, and that the enemy's fleet was approaching in a hostile manner: but he was soon eased of his fears; for, the channel growing shallower at every step I made, I came in a short time within hearing, and, holding up the end of the cable, by which the fleet was fastened, I cried in a loud voice, "Long live the most puissant king of Lilliput!" This great prince received me at my landing with all possible encomiums, and created me a *nardac* upon the spot, which is the highest title of honour among them.

When Steele established *The Tatler*, he called in the aid of several friends. Addison was his most valuable assistant, but Swift contributed several papers full of wit and good sense. In the following *Tatler* he sets forth in a feeling manner the trials that he has encountered in visiting.

Those inferior duties of life, which the French call *les petites morales*, or the smaller morals, are, with us, distinguished by the name of good manners, or breeding. This I look upon, in the general notion of it, to be a sort of artificial good sense, adapted to the meanest capacities, and introduced to make mankind easy in their commerce with each other. Low and little understandings, without some rules of this kind, would be perpetually wandering into a thousand indecencies and irregularities in behaviour; and in their ordinary conversation, fall into the same boisterous familiarities that one observes among them when a debauch has quite taken away the use of their reason. In other instances it is odd to consider, that, for want of common discretion, the very end of good breeding is wholly perverted; and civility, intended to make us easy, is employed in laying chains and fetters upon us, in debarring us of our wishes, and in crossing our most reasonable desires and inclinations. This abuse reigns chiefly in the country, as I found, to my vexation, when I was last there, in a visit I made to a neighbour about two miles from my cousin. As soon as I entered the parlour, they put me into the great chair that stood close by a huge fire, and kept me there by force, until I was almost stifled. Then a boy came in a great hurry to pull off my boots, which I in vain opposed, urging that I must return soon after dinner. In the mean time, the good lady whispered her eldest daughter, and slipped a key into her hand; the girl returned instantly with a beer glass half full of *aqua mirabilis* and syrup of gillyflowers. I took as much as I had a mind for, but madam avowed that I should drink it off; for she was sure it would do me good after coming out of the cold air; and I was forced to obey, which absolutely took away my stomach. When dinner came in, I had a mind to sit at a distance from the fire; but they told me it was as much as my life was worth, and set me with my back against it. Although my appetite was quite gone, I was resolved to force down as much as I could, and desired the leg of a pullet. "Indeed Mr. Bickerstaff (says the lady), you must eat a wing to oblige me;" and so put a couple upon my plate. I was persecuted at this rate during the whole meal; as often as I called for small-beer, the master tipped the wink, and the servant brought me a brimmer of Octo-



ber. Some time after dinner, I ordered my cousin's man, who came with me, to get ready the horses ; but it was resolved I should not stir that night ; and when I seemed pretty much bent upon going, they ordered the stable door to be locked, and the children hid my cloak and boots. The next question was, What would I have for supper ? I said, I never eat anything at night : but was at last, in my own defence, obliged to name the first thing that came into my head. After three hours spent chiefly in apologies for my entertainment, insinuating to me, " That this was the worst time of the year for provisions ; that they were at a great distance from any market ; that they were afraid I should be starved ; and that they knew they kept me to my loss ;" the lady went, and left me to her husband ; for they took special care I should never be alone. As soon as her back was turned, the little misses ran backward and forward every moment, and constantly as they came in, or went out, made a curtsy directly at me, which, in good manners, I was forced to return with a bow, and " Your humble servant, pretty miss." Exactly at eight the mother came up, and discovered, by the redness of her face, that supper was not far off. It was twice as large as the dinner, and my persecution doubled in proportion. I desired, at my usual hour, to go to my repose, and was conducted to my chamber by the gentleman, his lady, and the whole train of children. They importuned me to drink something before I went to bed ; and, upon my refusing, left at last a bottle of stingo, as they called it, for fear I should wake, and be thirsty in the night. I was forced in the morning to rise and dress myself in the dark, because they would not suffer my kinsman's servant to disturb me at the hour I desired to be called. I was now resolved to break through all measures to get away ; and, after sitting down to a monstrous breakfast of cold beef, mutton, neat's tongues, venison-pasty, and stale beer, took leave of the family. But the gentleman would needs see me part of the way, and carry me a short cut through his own ground, which he told me would save half a mile's riding. This last piece of civility had like to have cost me dear, being once or twice in danger of my neck, by leaping over his ditches, and at last forced to alight in the dirt, when my horse, having slipped his bridle, ran away, and took us up more than an hour to recover him again.

# DEFOE.

THE first selection describes the shipwreck of Robinson Crusoe. It is an example of Defoe's exact and literal, but rapid and vivid narrative. His description of a storm is very different from that which a more imaginative man would have written, and yet, in its own way, Defoe's method is thoroughly artistic.

And now our case was very dismal indeed; for we all saw plainly, that the sea went so high, that the boat could not live, and that we should be inevitably drowned. As to making sail, we had none, nor, if we had, could we have done anything with it; so we worked at the oar towards the land, though with heavy hearts, like men going to execution; for we all knew, that when the boat came nearer the shore, she would be dashed in a thousand pieces by the breach of the sea. However, we committed our souls to God in the most earnest manner; and the wind driving us towards the shore, we hastened our destruction with our own hands, pulling as well as we could towards land.

What the shore was, whether rock or sand, whether steep or shoal, we knew not; the only hope that could rationally give us the least shadow of expectation, was, if we might happen into some bay or gulf, or the mouth of some river, where by great chance we might have run our boat in, or got under the lee of the land, and perhaps made smooth water. But there was nothing of this appeared; but as we made nearer and nearer the shore, the land looked more frightful than the sea.

After we had rowed, or rather driven about a league and a half, as we reckoned it, a raging wave, mountain-like, came rolling astern of us, and plainly bade us expect the *coup de grace*. In a word, it took us with such a fury, that it overset the boat at once; and separating us as well from the boat as from one another, gave us not time to say, O God! for we were all swallowed up in a moment.

Nothing can describe the confusion of thought which I felt,

when I sunk into the water : for though I swam very well, yet I could not deliver myself from the waves so as to draw breath, till that wave having driven me, or rather carried me a vast way on towards the shore, and having spent itself, went back, and left me upon the land almost dry, but half dead with the water I took in. I had so much presence of mind, as well as breath left, that seeing myself nearer the main land than I expected, I got upon my feet, and endeavored to make on towards the land as fast as I could, before another wave should return, and take me up again. But I soon found it was impossible to avoid it ; for I saw the sea coming after me as high as a great hill, and as furious as an enemy which I had no means or strength to contend with ; my business was to hold my breath, and raise myself upon the water, if I could ; and so by swimming to preserve my breathing, and pilot myself towards the shore, if possible ; my greatest concern now being, that the sea, as it would carry me a great way towards the shore when it came on, might not carry me back again with it when it gave back towards the sea.

The wave that came upon me again, buried me at once twenty or thirty feet deep in its own body ; and I could feel myself carried with a mighty force and swiftness towards the shore a very great way ; but I held my breath, and assisted myself to swim still forward with all my might. I was ready to burst with holding my breath, when, as I felt myself rising up, so to my immediate relief, I found my head and hands shoot out above the surface of the water ; and though it was not two seconds of time that I could keep myself so, yet it relieved me greatly, gave me breath and new courage. I was covered again with water a good while, but not so long but I held it out ; and finding the water had spent itself, and began to return, I struck forward against the return of the waves, and felt ground again with my feet. I stood still a few moments to recover breath, and till the water went from me, and then took to my heels and run with what strength I had farther towards the shore. But neither would this deliver me from the fury of the sea, which came pouring in after me again, and twice more I was lifted up by the waves and carried forwards as before, the shore being very flat.

The last time of these two had well near been fatal to me ; for the sea having hurried me along as before, landed me, or rather dashed me against a piece of a rock, and that with such force, as it left me senseless, and indeed helpless, as to my own deliverance ; for the blow taking my side and breast, beat the breath as it were quite out of my body ; and had it returned again immediately, I must have been strangled in the water ; but I recovered a little before the return of the waves, and seeing I should be covered again with the water, I resolved to hold fast by a piece of the rock, and so to hold my breath, if possible, till the wave went back ; now as the waves were not so high as at first, being nearer land, I held my hold till the wave abated, and then fetched another run, which brought me so near the shore, that the next wave, though it went over me, yet did not so swallow me up as to carry me away, and the next run I took, I got to the main land, where, to my great comfort, I clambered up the cliffs of the shore, and sat me down upon the grass, free from danger, and quite out of the reach of the water.

The second selection shows Robinson Crusoe after he has taken up his abode on the island. His practical and business-like summing up of the situation is very characteristic of Defoe. The homely details of the story give it a reality that fastens every scene secure in the memory. Few novels read yesterday are remembered so distinctly as *Robinson Crusoe* read, perhaps, twenty years ago.

I now began to consider seriously my condition, and the circumstance I was reduced to, and I drew up the state of my affairs in writing, not so much to leave them to any that were to come after me, for I was like to have but few heirs, as to deliver my thoughts from daily poring upon them, and afflicting my mind ; and as my reason began now to master my despondency, I began to comfort myself as well as I could, and to set the good against the evil, that I might have something to distinguish my case from worse ; and I stated it very impartially, like debtor and creditor, the comforts I enjoyed against the miseries I suffered, thus :—

## EVIL.

I am cast upon a horrible desolate island, void of all hope of recovery.

I am singled out and separated, as it were, from all the world to be miserable.

I am divided from mankind, a solitaire, one banished from human society.

I have not clothes to cover me.

I am without any defence or means to resist any violence of man or beast.

I have no soul to speak to, or relieve me.

## GOOD.

But I am alive, and not drowned, as all my ship's company was.

But I am singled out too from all the ship's crew to be spared from death; and He that miraculously saved me from death, can deliver me from this condition.

But I am not starved and perishing on a barren place, affording no sustenance.

But I am in a hot climate, where if I had clothes I could hardly wear them.

But I am cast on an island, where I see no wild beasts to hurt me, as I saw on the coast of Africa: and what if I had been shipwrecked there?

But God wonderfully sent the ship in near enough to the shore, that I have got out as many necessary things as will either supply my wants or enable me to supply myself even as long as I live.

Upon the whole, here was an undoubted testimony, that there was scarce any condition in the world so miserable, but there was something *negative* or something *positive* to be thankful for in it; and let this stand as a direction from the experience of the most miserable of all conditions in this world, that we may always find in it something to comfort ourselves from, and to set in the description of good and evil, on the credit side of the account.

Having now brought my mind a little to relish my condition,



and given over looking out to sea, to see if I could spy a ship ; I say, giving over these things, I began to apply myself to accommodate my way of living, and to make things as easy to me as I could.

I have already described my habitation, which was a tent under the side of a rock, surrounded with a strong pale of posts and cables, but I might now rather call it a wall, for I raised a kind of wall up against it of turfs, about two feet thick on the outside, and after some time, I think it was a year and a half, I raised rafters from it leaning to the rock, and thatched or covered it with boughs of trees, and such things as I could get to keep out the rain, which I found at some times of the year very violent.

I have already observed how I brought all my goods into this pale, and into the cave which I had made behind me : but I must observe too that at first this was a confused heap of goods, which as they lay in no order, so they took up all my place ; I had no room to turn myself ; so I set myself to enlarge my cave and works farther into the earth ; for it was a loose sandy rock, which yielded easily to the labor I bestowed on it : and so when I found I was pretty safe as to beasts of prey, I worked sideways to the right hand into the rock ; and then turning to the right again, worked quite out, and made me a door to come out, on the outside of my pale or fortification.

This gave me not only egress and regress, as it was a back way to my tent and to my storehouse, but gave me room to store my goods.

And now I began to apply myself to make such necessary things as I found I most wanted, as particularly a chair and a table ; for without these I was not able to enjoy the few comforts I had in the world ; I could not write or eat, or do several things with so much pleasure without a table.

So I went to work ; and here I must needs observe, that as reason is the substance and original of the mathematics, so by stating and squaring everything by reason, and by making the most rational judgment of things, every man may be in time master of every mechanic art. I had never handled a tool in my life, and yet in time by labor, application and contrivance, I found at last that I wanted nothing but I could have made it,

especially if I had had tools ; however, I made abundance of things, even without tools, and some with no more tools than an adze and a hatchet, which perhaps were never made that way before, and that with infinite labour : for example, if I wanted a board, I had no other way but to cut down a tree, set it on an edge before me, and hew it flat on either side with my axe, till I had brought it to be thin as a plank, and then dub it smooth with my adze. It is true, by this method I could make but one board out of a whole tree, but this I had no remedy for but patience, any more than I had for the prodigious deal of time and labor which it took me up to make a plank or board : but my time or labor was little worth, and so it was as well employed one way as another.

However, I made me a table and a chair, as I observed above, in the first place ; and this I did out of the short pieces of boards that I brought on the raft from the ship. But when I had wrought out some boards, as above, I made large shelves of the breadth of a foot and a half one over another, all along one side of my cave, to lay all my tools, nails, and iron-work, and in a word, to separate everything at large into their places, that I might come easily at them ; I knocked pieces into the wall of the rock to hang my guns and all things that would hang up.

So that had my cave been to be seen, it looked like a general magazine of all necessary things, and I had everything so ready at my hand, that it was a great pleasure to me to see all my goods in such order, and especially to find my stock of all necessaries so great.

And now it was when I began to keep a journal of every day's employment, for indeed at first I was in too much hurry, and not only hurry as to labour, but in too much discomposure of mind, and my journal would have been full of many dull things. For example, I must have said thus : *Sept. the 30th*, after I had got to shore, and had escaped drowning, instead of being thankful to God for my deliverance, I ran about the shore, wringing my hands and beating my head and face, exclaiming at my misery, and crying out, I was undone, undone, till tired and faint I was forced to lie down on the ground to repose, but durst not sleep, for fear of being devoured.

Some days after this, and after I had been on board the ship, and got all that I could out of her, yet I could not forbear getting

up to the top of a little mountain, and looking out to sea in hopes of seeing a ship, then fancy at a vast distance I spied a sail, please myself with the hopes of it, and then after looking steadily till I was almost blind, lose it quite, and sit down and weep like a child, and thus increase my misery by my folly.

But having gotten over these things in some measure, and having settled my household stuff and habitation, made me a table and chair, and all as handsome about me as I could, I began to keep my journal, of which I shall here give you the copy (though in it will be told all these particulars over again) as long as it lasted, for having no more ink I was forced to leave it off.

### JOHNSON.

MOST readers will agree with Boswell that the *Lives of the Poets* constitute “the work which of all Dr. Johnson’s writings will perhaps be read most generally and with most pleasure.” We see here Johnson’s style at its best : vigorous, original, and clear as the opinions which it expresses. The following selection sets forth his estimate of Addison’s service to the world.

If any judgement be made, from his books, of his moral character, nothing will be found but purity and excellence. Knowledge of mankind indeed, less extensive than that of Addison, will shew, that to write, and to live, are very different. Many who praise virtue, do no more than praise it. Yet it is reasonable to believe that Addison’s professions and practice were at no great variance, since, amidst that storm of faction in which most of his life was passed, though his station made him conspicuous, and his activity made him formidable, the character given him by his friends was never contradicted by his enemies : of those with whom interest or opinion united him, he had not only the esteem, but the kindness ; and of others whom the violence of opposition drove against him, though he might lose the love, he retained the reverence.

It is justly observed by Tickell, that he employed wit on the side of virtue and religion. He not only made the proper use of

wit himself, but taught it to others ; and from his time it has been generally subservient to the cause of reason and of truth. He has dissipated the prejudice that had long connected gaiety with vice, and easiness of manners with laxity of principles. He has restored virtue to its dignity, and taught innocence not to be ashamed. This is an elevation of literary character, *above all Greek, above all Roman fame*. No greater felicity can genius attain than that of having purified intellectual pleasure, separated mirth from indecency, and wit from licentiousness ; of having taught a succession of writers to bring elegance and gaiety to the aid of goodness ; and, if I may use expressions yet more awful, of having *turned many to righteousness*.

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That he always wrote as he would think it necessary to write now, cannot be affirmed ; his instructions were such as the character of his readers made proper. That general knowledge which now circulates in common talk, was in his time rarely to be found. Men not professing learning were not ashamed of ignorance ; and in the female world, any acquaintance with books was distinguished only to be censured. His purpose was to infuse literary curiosity, by gentle and unsuspected conveyance, into the gay, the idle, and the wealthy ; he therefore presented knowledge in the most alluring form, not lofty and austere, but accessible and familiar. When he shewed them their defects, he shewed them likewise that they might be easily supplied. His attempt succeeded ; enquiry was awakened, and comprehension expanded. An emulation of intellectual elegance was excited, and from his time to our own, life has been gradually exalted, and conversation purified and enlarged.

Dryden had, not many years before, scattered criticism over his Prefaces with very little parsimony ; but though he sometimes condescended to be somewhat familiar, his manner was in general too scholastick for those who had yet their rudiments to learn, and found it not easy to understand their master. His observations were framed rather for those that were learning to write, than for those that read only to talk.

An instructor like Addison was now wanting, whose remarks being superficial, might be easily understood, and being just, might prepare the mind for more attainments. Had he pre-

sented *Paradise Lost* to the publick with all the pomp of system and severity of science, the criticism would perhaps have been admired, and the poem still have been neglected; but by the blandishments of gentleness and facility, he has made Milton an universal favourite, with whom readers of every class think it necessary to be pleased.

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As a describer of life and manners, he must be allowed to stand perhaps the first of the first rank. His humour, which, as Steele observes, is peculiar to himself, is so happily diffused as to give the grace of novelty to domestick scenes and daily occurrences. He never *outsteps the modesty of nature*, nor raises merriment or wonder by the violation of truth. His figures neither divert by distortion, nor amaze by aggravation. He copies life with so much fidelity, that he can be hardly said to invent; yet his exhibitions have an air so much original, that it is difficult to suppose them not merely the product of imagination.

As a teacher of wisdom, he may be confidently followed. His religion has nothing in it enthusiastick or superstitious: he appears neither weakly credulous nor wantonly sceptical; his morality is neither dangerously lax, nor impracticably rigid. All the enchantment of fancy, and all the cogency of argument, are employed to recommend to the reader his real interest, the care of pleasing the Author of his being. Truth is shewn sometimes as the phantom of a vision, sometimes appears half-veiled in an allegory; sometimes attracts regard in the robes of fancy, and sometimes steps forth in the confidence of reason. She wears a thousand dresses, and in all is pleasing.

His prose is the model of the middle style; on grave subjects not formal, on light occasions not groveling; pure without scrupulosity, and exact without apparent elaboration; always equitable, and always easy, without glowing words or pointed sentences. Addison never deviates from his track to snatch a grace; he seeks no ambitious ornaments, and tries no hazardous innovations. His page is always luminous, but never blazes in unexpected splendour.

It was apparently his principal endeavour to avoid all harshness and severity of diction; he is therefore sometimes verbose in his transitions and connections, and sometimes descends too



much to the language of conversation; yet if his language had been less idiomatical, it might have lost somewhat of its genuine Anglicism. What he attempted, he performed; he is never feeble, and he did not wish to be energetick; he is never rapid, and he never stagnates. His sentences have neither studied amplitude; nor affected brevity: his periods, though not diligently rounded, are voluble and easy. Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison.

Johnson's famous parallel between Dryden and Pope will be read with interest by the pupil who has studied those writers.

He professed to have learned his poetry from Dryden, whom, whenever an opportunity was presented, he praised through his whole life with unvaried liberality; and perhaps his character may receive some illustration, if he be compared with his master.

Integrity of understanding and nicety of discernment were not allotted in a less proportion to Dryden than to Pope. The rectitude of Dryden's mind was sufficiently shewn by the dismissal of his poetical prejudices, and the rejection of unnatural thoughts and rugged numbers. But Dryden never desired to apply all the judgement that he had. He wrote, and professed to write, merely for the people; and when he pleased others, he contented himself. He spent no time in struggles to rouse latent powers; he never attempted to make that better which was already good, nor often to mend what he must have known to be faulty. He wrote, as he tells us, with very little consideration; when occasion or necessity called upon him, he poured out what the present moment happened to supply, and, when once it had passed the press, ejected it from his mind; for when he had no pecuniary interest, he had no further solicitude.

Pope was not content to satisfy; he desired to excel, and therefore always endeavoured to do his best: he did not court the candour, but dared the judgement of his reader, and, expecting no indulgence from others, he shewed none to himself. He examined lines and words with minute and punctilious observation,

and retouched every part with indefatigable diligence, till he had left nothing to be forgiven.

For this reason he kept his pieces very long in his hands, while he considered and reconsidered them. The only poems which can be supposed to have been written with such regard to the times as might hasten their publication, were the two satires of *Thirty-eight*; of which Dodsley told me, that they were brought to him by the author, that they might be fairly copied. "Almost every line," he said, "was then written twice over; I gave him a clean transcript, which he sent some time afterwards to me for the press, with almost every line written twice over a second time."

His declaration, that his care for his works ceased at their publication, was not strictly true. His parental attention never abandoned them; what he found amiss in the first edition, he silently corrected in those that followed. He appears to have revised the *Iliad*, and freed it from some of its imperfections; and the *Essay on Criticism* received many improvements after its first appearance. It will seldom be found that he altered without adding clearness, elegance, or vigour. Pope had perhaps the judgement of Dryden; but Dryden certainly wanted the diligence of Pope.

In acquired knowledge, the superiority must be allowed to Dryden, whose education was more scholastick, and who before he became an author had been allowed more time for study, with better means of information. His mind has a larger range, and he collects his images and illustrations from a more extensive circumference of science. Dryden knew more of man in his general nature, and Pope in his local manners. The notions of Dryden were formed by comprehensive speculation, and those of Pope by minute attention. There is more dignity in the knowledge of Dryden, and more certainty in that of Pope.

Poetry was not the sole praise of either; for both excelled likewise in prose; but Pope did not borrow his prose from his predecessor. The style of Dryden is capricious and varied, that of Pope is cautious and uniform; Dryden obeys the motions of his own mind, Pope constrains his mind to his own rules of composition. Dryden is sometimes vehement and rapid; Pope is always smooth, uniform, and gentle. Dryden's page is a natural field, rising into inequalities, and diversified by the varied exuberance

of abundant vegetation ; Pope's is a velvet lawn, shaven by the scythe, and levelled by the roller.

Of genius, that power which constitutes a poet ; that quality without which judgement is cold and knowledge is inert ; that energy which collects, combines, amplifies, and animates ; the superiority must, with some hesitation, be allowed to Dryden. It is not to be inferred that of this poetical vigour Pope had only a little because Dryden had more ; for every other writer since Milton must give place to Pope ; and even of Dryden it must be said, that if he has brighter paragraphs, he has not better poems. Dryden's performances were always hasty, either excited by some external occasion, or extorted by domestick necessity ; he composed without consideration, and published without correction. What his mind could supply at call, or gather in one excursion, was all that he sought, and all that he gave. The dilatory caution of Pope enabled him to condense his sentiments, to multiply his images, and to accumulate all that study might produce, or chance might supply. If the flights of Dryden therefore are higher, Pope continues longer on the wing. If of Dryden's fire the blaze is brighter, of Pope's the heat is more regular and constant. Dryden often surpasses expectation, and Pope never falls below it. Dryden is read with frequent astonishment, and Pope with perpetual delight.

The following extract from Boswell's *Life of Johnson* relates how Boswell first made the acquaintance of his hero, and shows with great distinctness the characters of the two men. Let the pupil consider what traits of each are to be discovered here.

This [1763] is to me a memorable year ; for in it I had the happiness to obtain the acquaintance of that extraordinary man whose memoirs I am now writing ; an acquaintance which I shall ever esteem as one of the most fortunate circumstances in my life. Though then but two-and-twenty, I had for several years read his works with delight and instruction, and had the highest reverence for their author, which had grown up in my fancy into a kind of mysterious veneration, by figuring to myself a state of solemn

elevated abstraction in which I supposed him to live in the immense metropolis of London. Mr. Gentleman, a native of Ireland, who passed some years in Scotland as a player, and as an instructor in the English language, a man whose talents and worth were depressed by misfortunes, had given me a representation of the figure and manner of DICTIONARY JOHNSON! as he was then called; and during my first visit to London, which was for three months in 1760, Mr. Derrick the poet, who was Gentleman's friend and countryman, flattered me with hopes that he would introduce me to Johnson,—an honour of which I was very ambitious. But he never found an opportunity; which made me doubt that he had promised to do what was not in his power; till Johnson some years afterwards told me, “Derrick, Sir, might very well have introduced you. I had a kindness for Derrick, and am sorry he is dead.”

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Mr. Thomas Davies, the actor, who then kept a bookseller's shop in Russell street, Covent Garden, told me that Johnson was very much his friend, and came frequently to his house, where he more than once invited me to meet him; but by some unlucky accident or other he was prevented from coming to us.

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At last, on Monday, the 16th of May, when I was sitting in Mr. Davies's back parlour, after having drunk tea with him and Mrs. Davies, Johnson unexpectedly came into the shop; and Mr. Davies having perceived him, through the glass-door in the room in which we were sitting, advancing towards us,—he announced his awful approach to me, somewhat in the manner of an actor in the part of *Horatio*, when he addresses *Hamlet* on the appearance of his father's ghost, “Look, my Lord, it comes!” I found that I had a very perfect idea of Johnson's figure, from the portrait of him painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds soon after he had published his “Dictionary,” in the attitude of sitting in his easy chair in deep meditation; which was the first picture his friend did for him, which Sir Joshua very kindly presented to me. Mr. Davies mentioned my name, and respectfully introduced me to him. I was much agitated; and recollecting his prejudice against the Scotch, of which I had heard much, I said to Davies, “Don't tell where I come from.”—“From Scotland,” cried Davies, roguishly. “Mr.

Johnson," said I, "I do indeed come from Scotland, but I cannot help it." I am willing to flatter myself that I meant this as light pleasantry to soothe and conciliate him, and not as an humiliating abasement at the expense of my country. But however that might be, this speech was somewhat unlucky; for with that quickness of wit for which he was so remarkable, he seized the expression, "come from Scotland," which I used in the sense of being of that country; and, as if I had said that I had come away from it, or left it, retorted, "That, Sir, I find, is what a very great many of your countrymen cannot help." This stroke stunned me a good deal; and when we had sat down, I felt myself not a little embarrassed, and apprehensive of what might come next. He then addressed himself to Davies: "What do you think of Garrick? He has refused me an order for the play for Miss Williams, because he knows the house will be full, and that an order would be worth three shillings." Eager to take any opening to get into conversation with him, I ventured to say, "O Sir, I cannot think Mr. Garrick would grudge such a trifle to you." "Sir," said he, with a stern look, "I have known David Garrick longer than you have done: and I know no right you have to talk to me on the subject." Perhaps I deserved this check; for it was rather presumptuous in me, an entire stranger, to express any doubt of the justice of his animadversion upon his old acquaintance and pupil. I now felt myself much mortified, and began to think that the hope which I had long indulged of obtaining his acquaintance was blasted. And, in truth, had not my ardour been uncommonly strong, and my resolution uncommonly persevering, so rough a reception might have deterred me for ever from making any further attempts. Fortunately, however, I remained upon the field not wholly discomfited; and was soon rewarded by hearing some of his conversation.

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I was highly pleased with the extraordinary vigour of his conversation, and regretted that I was drawn away from it by an engagement at another place. I had, for a part of the evening, been left alone with him, and had ventured to make an observation now and then, which he received very civilly; so that I was satisfied that though there was a roughness in his manner, there was no ill-nature in his disposition. Davies followed me to the



door, and when I complained to him a little of the hard blows which the great man had given me, he kindly took upon him to console me by saying, "Don't be uneasy, I can see he likes you very well."

A few days afterwards I called on Davies, and asked him if he thought I might take the liberty of waiting on Mr. Johnson at his chambers in the Temple. He said I certainly might, and that Mr. Johnson would take it as a compliment. So upon Tuesday the 24th of May, after having been enlivened by the witty sallies of Messieurs Thornton, Wilkes, Churchill, and Lloyd, with whom I passed the morning, I boldly repaired to Johnson. His chambers were on the first floor of No. 1, Inner Temple Lane, and I entered them with an impression given me by the Reverend Dr. Blair of Edinburgh, who had been introduced to me not long before, and described his having "found the Giant in his den;" an expression which, when I came to be pretty well acquainted with Johnson, I repeated to him, and he was diverted at this picturesque account of himself. Dr. Blair had been presented to him by Dr. James Fordyce. At this time the controversy concerning the pieces published by Mr. James Macpherson, as translations of Ossian, was at its height. Johnson had all along denied their authenticity; and, what was still more provoking to their admirers, maintained that they had no merit. The subject having been introduced by Dr. Fordyce, Dr. Blair, relying on the internal evidence of their antiquity, asked Dr. Johnson whether he thought any man of a modern age could have written such poems? Johnson replied, "Yes, Sir, many men, many women, and many children." Johnson, at this time, did not know that Dr. Blair had just published a Dissertation, not only defending their authenticity, but seriously ranking them with the poems of Homer and Virgil; and when he was afterwards informed of this circumstance, he expressed some displeasure at Dr. Fordyce's having suggested the topic, and said, "I am not sorry that they got thus much for their pains. Sir, it was like leading one to talk of a book, when the author is concealed behind the door."

He received me very courteously; but it must be confessed, that his apartment, and furniture, and morning dress, were sufficiently uncouth. His brown suit of clothes looked very rusty;

he had on a little old shrivelled unpowdered wig, which was too small for his head ; his shirt-neck and knees of his breeches were loose ; his black worsted stockings ill drawn up ; and he had a pair of unbuckled shoes by way of slippers. But all these slovenly particularities were forgotten the moment that he began to talk. Some gentlemen, whom I do not recollect, were sitting with him ; and when they went away, I also rose ; but he said to me, "Nay, don't go."—"Sir," said I, "I am afraid that I intrude upon you. It is benevolent to allow me to sit and hear you." He seemed pleased with this compliment, which I sincerely paid him, and answered, "Sir, I am obliged to any man who visits me."

How Boswell gathered material for the biography is related on page 145. The following brief extracts convey some notion of his success in reporting the sayings of his master.

Talking of the eminent writers in Queen Anne's reign, he observed, "I think Dr. Arbuthnot the first man among them. He was the most universal genius, being an excellent physician, a man of deep learning, and a man of much humour. Mr. Addison was, to be sure, a great man ; his learning was not profound, but his morality, his humour, and his elegance of writing, set him very high."

Mr. Ogilvie was unlucky enough to choose for the topic of his conversation the praises of his native country. He began with saying, that there was very rich land around Edinburgh. Goldsmith, who had studied physic there, contradicted this, very untruly, with a sneering laugh. Disconcerted a little by this, Mr. Ogilvie then took a new ground, where, I suppose, he thought himself perfectly safe ; for he observed, that Scotland had a great many noble wild prospects. JOHNSON : "I believe, Sir, you have a great many. Norway, too, has noble wild prospects ; and Lapland is remarkable for prodigious noble wild prospects. But, Sir, let me tell you, the noblest prospect which a Scotchman ever sees, is the high road that leads him to England !" This unexpected and pointed sally produced a roar of applause. After all, however,

those who admire the rude grandeur of nature cannot deny it to Caledonia.

On Thursday, July 28, we again supped in private at the Turk's Head coffee-house. JOHNSON: "Swift has a higher reputation than he deserves. His excellence is strong sense; for his humour, though very well, is not remarkably good. I doubt whether the 'Tale of a Tub' be his; for he never owned it, and it is much above his usual manner."

On Saturday, July 30, Dr. Johnson and I took a sculler at the Temple-stairs, and set out for Greenwich. I asked him if he really thought a knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages an essential requisite to a good education. JOHNSON: "Most certainly, Sir; for those who know them have a very great advantage over those who do not. Nay, Sir, it is wonderful what a difference learning makes upon people even in the common intercourse of life, which does not appear to be much connected with it." "And yet," said I, "people go through the world very well, and carry on the business of life to good advantage, without learning." JOHNSON: "Why, Sir, that may be true in cases where learning cannot possibly be of any use; for instance, this boy rows us as well without learning as if he could sing the song of Orpheus to the Argonauts, who were the first sailors." He then called to the boy, "What would you give, my lad, to know about the Argonauts?" "Sir," said the boy, "I would give what I have." Johnson was much pleased with his answer, and we gave him a double fare. Dr. Johnson then turning to me, "Sir," said he, "a desire of knowledge is the natural feeling of mankind; and every human being whose mind is not debauched, will be willing to give all that he has, to get knowledge."

Talking of a London life, he said, "The happiness of London is not to be conceived but by those who have been in it. I will venture to say, there is more learning and science within the circumference of ten miles from where we now sit, than in all the rest of the kingdom." BOSWELL: "The only disadvantage is the great distance at which people live from one another." JOHNSON: "Yes, Sir; but that is occasioned by the largeness of it, which is

the cause of all the other advantages." BOSWELL: "Sometimes I have been in the humour of wishing to retire to a desert." JOHNSON: "Sir, you have desert enough in Scotland."

I suggested a doubt, that if I were to reside in London, the exquisite zest with which I relished it in occasional visits might go off, and I might grow tired of it. JOHNSON: "Why, Sir; you find no man, at all intellectual, who is willing to leave London. No, Sir, when a man is tired of London, he is tired of life; for there is in London all that life can afford."

There was a pretty large circle this evening. Dr. Johnson was in very good humour, lively, and ready to talk upon all subjects. Mr. Ferguson, the self-taught philosopher, told him of a new-invented machine which went without horses: a man who sat in it turned a handle, which worked a spring that drove it forward. "Then, Sir," said Johnson, "what is gained is, the man has his choice whether he will move himself alone, or himself and the machine too." Dominicetti being mentioned, he would not allow him any merit. "There is nothing in all this boasted system. No, Sir; medicated baths can be no better than warm water; their only effect can be that of tepid moisture." One of the company took the other side, maintaining that medicines of various sorts, and some too of most powerful effect, are introduced into the human frame by the medium of the pores; and, therefore, when warm water is impregnated with salutiferous substances, it may produce great effects as a bath. This appeared to me very satisfactory. Johnson did not answer it; but talking for victory, and determined to be master of the field, he had recourse to the device which Goldsmith imputed to him in the witty words of one of Cibber's comedies: "There is no arguing with Johnson; for when his pistol misses fire, he knocks you down with the butt-end of it." He turned to the gentleman, "Well, Sir, go to Dominicetti, and get thyself fumigated; but be sure that the steam be directed to thy *head*, for *that* is the *peccant part*." This produced a triumphant roar of laughter from the motley assembly of philosophers, printers, and dependents, male and female.

After dinner our conversation first turned upon Pope. Johnson said, his characters of men were admirably drawn, those of women not so well. He repeated to us, in his forcible, melodious manner, the concluding lines of the *Dunciad*. While he was talking loudly in praise of those lines, one of the company [Boswell ?] ventured to say, "Too fine for such a poem :—a poem on what ?" JOHNSON (with a disdainful look) : "Why, on *dunces*. It was worth while being a dunce then. Ah, Sir, hadst *thou* lived in those days ! It is not worth while being a dunce now, when there are no wits."

## BURKE.

THE first selection is taken from the *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. Burke loved "a manly, moral, regulated liberty," and the liberty which Frenchmen were then trying to establish was, in his opinion, far from that ideal. The views he sets forth here are consistent with his statesmanship. Burke was never willing to look at a subject in the abstract ; he must judge of it in all its practical bearings. He believed in facts rather than in theories. This characteristic is admirably illustrated in the extract that follows.

I flatter myself that I love a manly, moral, regulated liberty as well as any gentleman of that Society, be he who he will ; and perhaps I have given as good proofs of my attachment to that cause, in the whole course of my public conduct. I think I envy liberty as little as they do, to any other nation. But I cannot stand forward, and give praise or blame to any thing which relates to human actions, and human concerns, on a simple view of the object, as it stands stripped of every relation, in all the nakedness and solitude of metaphysical abstraction. Circumstances (which with some gentlemen pass for nothing) give in reality to every political principle its distinguishing colour, and discriminating effect. The circumstances are what render every civil and political scheme beneficial or noxious to mankind. Abstract-



edly speaking, government, as well as liberty, is good ; yet could I, in common sense, ten years ago, have felicitated France on her enjoyment of a government (for she then had a government) without inquiry what the nature of that government was, or how it was administered ? Can I now congratulate the same nation upon its freedom ? Is it because liberty in the abstract may be classed amongst the blessings of mankind, that I am seriously to felicitate a madman, who has escaped from the protecting restraint and wholesome darkness of his cell, on his restoration to the enjoyment of light and liberty ? Am I to congratulate a highwayman and murderer, who has broke prison, upon the recovery of his natural rights ? This would be to act over again the scene of the criminals condemned to the galleys, and their heroic deliverer, the metaphysic Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance.

When I see the spirit of liberty in action, I see a strong principle at work ; and this, for awhile, is all I can possibly know of it. The wild *gas*, the fixed air, is plainly broke loose : but we ought to suspend our judgment until the first effervescence is a little subsided, till the liquor is cleared, and until we see something deeper than the agitation of a troubled and frothy surface. I must be tolerably sure, before I venture publicly to congratulate men upon a blessing, that they have really received one. Flattery corrupts both the receiver and the giver ; and adulation is not of more service to the people than to kings. I should therefore suspend my congratulations on the new liberty of France, until I was informed how it had been combined with government ; with public force ; with the discipline and obedience of armies ; with the collection of an effective and well-distributed revenue ; with morality and religion ; with the solidity of property ; with peace and order ; with civil and social manners. All these (in their way) are good things too ; and, without them, liberty is not a benefit whilst it lasts, and is not likely to continue long. The effect of liberty to individuals is, that they may do what they please ; we ought to see what it will please them to do, before we risque congratulations, which may be soon turned into complaints. Prudence would dictate this in the case of separate insulated private men ; but liberty, when men act in bodies, is *power*. Considerate people, before they declare themselves, will

observe the use which is made of *power*; and particularly of so trying a thing as *new* power in *new* persons, of whose principles, tempers, and dispositions, they have little or no experience, and in situations where those who appear the most stirring in the scene may possibly not be the real movers.

Burke's love of the Past has been referred to. His conservative temper is eloquently expressed in the following noble passage from the *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. A young American may with profit compare his own notions of liberty with those which he finds set forth in these selections from Burke.

You will observe, that from Magna Charta to the Declaration of Right, it has been the uniform policy of our constitution to claim and assert our liberties, as an *entailed inheritance* derived to us from our forefathers, and to be transmitted to our posterity; as an estate specially belonging to the people of this kingdom without any reference whatever to any other more general or prior right. By this means our constitution preserves an unity in so great a diversity of its parts. We have an inheritable crown; an inheritable peerage; and an house of commons and a people inheriting privileges, franchises, and liberties, from a long line of ancestors.

This policy appears to me to be the result of profound reflection; or rather the happy effect of following nature, which is wisdom without reflection, and above it. A spirit of innovation is generally the result of a selfish temper and confined views. People will not look forward to posterity, who never look backward to their ancestors. Besides, the people of England well know, that the idea of inheritance furnishes a sure principle of conservation, and a sure principle of transmission; without at all excluding a principle of improvement. It leaves acquisition free; but it secures what it acquires. Whatever advantages are obtained by a state proceeding on these maxims, are locked fast as in a sort of family settlement; grasped as in a kind of mortmain for ever. By a constitutional policy, working after the pattern of nature, we receive, we hold, we transmit our govern-

ment and our privileges, in the same manner in which we enjoy and transmit our property and our lives. The institutions of policy, the goods of fortune, the gifts of Providence, are handed down, to us and from us, in the same course and order. Our political system is placed in a just correspondence and symmetry with the order of the world, and with the mode of existence decreed to a permanent body composed of transitory parts; wherein, by the disposition of a stupendous wisdom, moulding together the great mysterious incorporation of the human race, the whole, at one time, is never old, or middle-aged, or young, but in a condition of unchangeable constancy, moves on through the varied tenour of perpetual decay, fall, renovation, and progression. Thus, by preserving the method of nature in the conduct of the state, in what we improve, we are never wholly new; in what we retain we are never wholly obsolete. By adhering in this manner and on those principles to our forefathers, we are guided not by the superstition of antiquarians, but by the spirit of philosophic analogy. In this choice of inheritance we have given to our frame of polity the image of a relation in blood; binding up the Constitution of our country with our dearest domestic ties; adopting our fundamental laws into the bosom of our family affections; keeping inseparable, and cherishing with the warmth of all their combined and mutually reflected charities, our state, our hearths, our sepulchres, and our altars.

Through the same plan of a conformity to nature in our artificial institutions, and by calling in the aid of her unerring and powerful instincts, to fortify the fallible and feeble contrivances of our reason, we have derived several other, and those no small benefits, from considering our liberties in the light of an inheritance. Always acting as if in the presence of canonized forefathers, the spirit of freedom, leading in itself to misrule and excess, is tempered with an awful gravity. This idea of a liberal descent inspires us with a sense of habitual native dignity, which prevents that upstart insolence almost inevitably adhering to and disgracing those who are the first acquirers of any distinction. By this means our liberty becomes a noble freedom. It carries an imposing and majestic aspect. It has a pedigree and illustrating ancestors. It has its bearings and its ensigns armorial. It has its gallery of portraits; its monumental inscriptions; its

records, evidences, and titles. We procure reverence to our civil institutions on the principle upon which nature teaches us to revere individual men ; on account of their age, and on account of those from whom they are descended. All your sophisters cannot produce any thing better adapted to preserve a rational and manly freedom than the course that we have pursued, who have chosen our nature rather than our speculations, our breasts rather than our inventions, for the great conservatories and magazines of our rights and privileges.

The following words of Burke were spoken by him in the House of Commons, March 22, 1775. He pleaded for Conciliation with America. "The superior power may offer peace with honour and with safety," he argued. "Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom," was a principle of his statesmanship. Burke's noble appeal was of little avail ; for in less than a month came the battles of Concord and Lexington—and there was fired "the shot heard round the world."

My hold of the Colonies is in the close affection which grows from common names, from kindred blood, from similar privileges, and equal protection. These are ties, which, though light as air, are as strong as links of iron. Let the Colonists always keep the idea of their civil rights associated with your government ;—they will cling and grapple to you ; and no force under heaven will be of power to tear them from their allegiance. But let it be once understood, that your government may be one thing, and their Privileges another ; that these two things may exist without any mutual relation ;—the cement is gone ; the cohesion is loosened ; and everything hastens to decay and dissolution. As long as you have the wisdom to keep the sovereign authority of this country as the sanctuary of liberty, the sacred temple consecrated to our common faith, wherever the chosen race and sons of England worship freedom, they will turn their faces towards you. The more they multiply, the more friends you will have ; the more ardently they love liberty, the more perfect will



be their obedience. Slavery they can have anywhere. It is a weed that grows in every soil. They may have it from Spain, they may have it from Prussia. But, until you become lost to all feeling of your true interest and your natural dignity, freedom they can have from none but you. This is the commodity of price, of which you have the monopoly. This is the true Act of Navigation, which binds to you the commerce of the Colonies, and through them secures to you the wealth of the world. Deny them this participation of freedom, and you break that sole bond, which originally made, and must still preserve, the unity of the Empire. Do not entertain so weak an imagination, as that your registers and your bonds, your affidavits and your sufferances, your cockets and your clearances, are what form the great securities of your commerce. Do not dream that your letters of office, and your instructions, and your suspending clauses, are the things that hold together the great contexture of the mysterious whole. These things do not make your government. Dead instruments, passive tools as they are, it is the spirit of the English communion that gives all their life and efficacy to them. It is the spirit of the English Constitution, which, infused through the mighty mass, pervades, feeds, unites, invigorates, vivifies every part of the empire, even down to the minutest member.

Is it not the same virtue which does every thing for us here in England? Do you imagine, then, that it is the Land-tax Act which raises your revenue? that it is the annual vote in the Committee of Supply which gives you your army? or that it is the Mutiny Bill which inspires it with bravery and discipline? No! surely no! It is the love of the people; it is their attachment to their government, from the sense of the deep stake they have in such a glorious institution—which gives you your army and your navy, and infuses into both that liberal obedience, without which your army would be a base rabble, and your navy nothing but rotten timber.

All this, I know well enough, will sound wild and chimerical to the profane herd of those vulgar and mechanical politicians who have no place among us; a sort of people who think that nothing exists but what is gross and material; and who therefore, far from being qualified to be directors of the great move-



ment of empire, are not fit to turn a wheel in the machine. But to men truly initiated and rightly taught, these ruling and master principles, which, in the opinion of such men as I have mentioned, have no substantial existence, are in truth every thing, and all in all. Magnanimity in politicks is not seldom the truest wisdom ; and a great empire and little minds go ill together. If we are conscious of our station, and glow with zeal to fill our place as becomes our situation and ourselves, we ought to auspicate all our public proceedings on America with the old warning of the Church, *Sursum corda!* We ought to elevate our minds to the greatness of that trust to which the order of Providence has called us. By adverting to the dignity of this high calling, our ancestors have turned a savage wilderness into a glorious empire ; and have made the most extensive and the only honourable conquests, not by destroying, but by promoting the wealth, the number, the happiness, of the human race. Let us get an American revenue as we have got an American empire. English privileges have made it all that it is ; English privileges alone will make it all it can be.

## GOLDSMITH.

IN a merry company at a London coffee-house, Oliver Goldsmith and his friend Garrick were once rallying each other, when it was agreed that each should write the other's epitaph. Garrick immediately produced the following lines :

“ Here lies Nolly Goldsmith, for shortness call'd Noll,  
Who wrote like an angel, but talk'd like poor Poll.”

“ Goldsmith, upon the company's laughing very heartily,” so Garrick tells us, “grew very thoughtful, and either would not or could not write anything at that time ; however, he went to work, and some weeks after produced the following printed form, called *Retaliation*. The public in general have been mistaken in imagining that

this poem was written in anger by the Doctor ; it was just the contrary ; the whole on all sides was done with the greatest good humour." The epitaphs of Burke, Garrick, and Sir Joshua Reynolds are given in the selections :

Here lies our good Edmund, whose genius was such,  
We scarcely can praise it, or blame it too much ;  
Who, born for the universe, narrow'd his mind,  
And to party gave up what was meant for mankind ;  
Though fraught with all learning, yet straining his throat  
To persuade Tommy Townshend to lend him a vote ;  
Who, too deep for his hearers, still went on refining,  
And thought of convincing, while they thought of dining ;  
Though equal to all things, for all things unfit ;  
Too nice for a statesman, too proud for a wit,  
For a patriot too cool, for a drudge disobedient,  
And too fond of the *right* to pursue the *expedient*.  
In short 'twas his fate, unemploy'd, or in place, sir,  
To eat mutton cold, and cut blocks with a razor.

Here lies David Garrick, describe me who can,  
An abridgment of all that was pleasant in man :  
As an actor, confess'd without rival to shine ;  
As a wit, if not first, in the very first line ;  
Yet, with talents like these, and an excellent heart,  
The man had his failings, a dupe to his art.  
Like an ill-judging beauty, his colours he spread  
And beplaster'd with rouge his own natural red.  
On the stage he was natural, simple, affecting ;  
'Twas only that when he was off he was acting.  
With no reason on earth to go out of his way,  
He turn'd and he varied full ten times a day.  
Though secure of our hearts, yet confoundedly sick  
If they were not his own by finessing and trick :  
He cast off his friends, as a huntsman his pack,  
For he knew when he pleas'd he could whistle them back.  
Of praise a mere glutton, he swallow'd what came,  
And the puff of a dunce he mistook it for fame ;  
Till his relish grown callous, almost to disease,  
Who pepper'd the highest was surest to please.

But let us be candid, and speak out our mind,  
If dunces applauded, he paid them in kind.  
Ye Kenricks, ye Kellys, ye Woodfalls so grave,  
What a commerce was yours while you got and you gave,  
How did Grub-street re-echo the shouts that you rais'd,  
While he was be-Roscius'd, and you were be-prais'd!  
But peace to his spirit, wherever it flies,  
To act as an angel, and mix with the skies:  
Those poets, who owe their best fame to his skill,  
Shall still be his flatterers, go where he will;  
Old Shakespeare receive him with praise and with love,  
And Beaumonts and Bens be his Kellys above.

Here Reynolds is laid, and, to tell you my mind,  
He has not left a wiser or better behind:  
His pencil was striking, resistless, and grand;  
His manners were gentle, complying, and bland;  
Still born to improve us in every part,  
His pencil our faces, his manners our heart.  
To coxcombs averse, yet most civilly steering,  
When they judg'd without skill he was still hard of hearing;  
When they talk'd of their Raphaels, Correggios, and stuff,  
He shifted his trumpet, and only took snuff.

The portrait of the school-master, one of the worthies  
of *The Deserted Village*, is a bit of description in Goldsmith's best vein.

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,  
With blossom'd furze unprofitably gay,  
There, in his noisy mansion, skill'd to rule,  
The village master taught his little school.  
A man severe he was, and stern to view;  
I knew him well, and every truant knew:  
Well had the boding tremblers learn'd to trace  
The day's disasters in his morning face;  
Full well they laugh'd with counterfeited glee  
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;  
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,  
Convey'd the dismal tidings when he frown'd.

Yet he was kind, or if severe in aught,  
The love he bore to learning was in fault.  
The village all declar'd how much he knew;  
'Twas certain he could write, and cipher too,  
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,  
And even the story ran that he could gauge.  
In arguing too, the parson own'd his skill,  
For even though vanquish'd he could argue still;  
While words of learned length and thundering sound  
Amaz'd the gazing rustics rang'd around;  
And still they gaz'd, and still the wonder grew  
That one small head could carry all he knew.

The following selection from *The Vicar of Wakefield* is, to use Goldsmith's own words, "The Description of the Family of Wakefield, in which a Kindred Likeness prevails as well of Minds as of Persons."

I was ever of opinion, that the honest man who married and brought up a large family did more service than he who continued single, and only talked of population. From this motive, I had scarce taken orders a year before I began to think seriously of matrimony, and chose my wife, as she did her wedding-gown, not for a fine glossy surface, but such qualities as would wear well. To do her justice, she was a good-natured, notable woman; and as for breeding, there were few country ladies who could show more. She could read any English book without much spelling; but for pickling, preserving, and cookery, none could excel her. She prided herself also upon being an excellent contriver in housekeeping; though I could never find that we grew richer with all her contrivances.

However, we loved each other tenderly, and our fondness increased as we grew old. There was, in fact, nothing that could make us angry with the world or each other. We had an elegant house, situated in a fine country, and a good neighborhood. The year was spent in a moral or rural amusement, in visiting our rich neighbors, and relieving such as were poor. We had no revolutions to fear, nor fatigues to undergo; all our adventures

were by the fireside, and all our migrations from the blue bed to the brown.

As we lived near the road, we often had the traveller or stranger visit us to taste our gooseberry wine, for which we had great reputation ; and I profess, with the veracity of an historian, that I never knew one of them find fault with it. Our cousins, too, even to the fortieth remove, all remembered their affinity, without any help from the herald's office, and came very frequently to see us. Some of them did us no great honor by these claims of kindred, as we had the blind, the maimed, and the halt among the number. However, my wife always insisted that, as they were the same *flesh and blood*, they should sit with us at the same table. So that, if we had not very rich, we generally had very happy friends about us ; for this remark will hold good through life, that the poorer the guest the better pleased he ever is with being treated ; and as some men gaze with admiration at the colors of a tulip or the wing of a butterfly, so I was, by nature, an admirer of happy human faces. However, when any one of our relations was found to be a person of very bad character, a troublesome guest, or one we desired to get rid of, upon his leaving my house I ever took care to lend him a riding-coat or a pair of boots, or sometimes an horse of small value, and I always had the satisfaction of finding he never came back to return them. By this the house was cleared of such as we did not like ; but never was the family of Wakefield known to turn the traveller or the poor dependent out of doors.

Thus we lived several years in a state of much happiness, not but that we sometimes had those little rubs which Providence sends to enhance the value of its favours. My orchard was often robbed by school-boys, and my wife's custards plundered by the cats or the children. The squire would sometimes fall asleep in the most pathetic parts of my sermon, or his lady return my wife's civilities at church with a mutilated courtesy. But we soon got over the uneasiness caused by such accidents, and usually in three or four days began to wonder how they vexed us.

My children, the offspring of temperance, as they were educated without softness, so they were at once well formed and healthy ; my sons hardy and active, my daughters beautiful and blooming. When I stood in the midst of the little circle, which



promised to be the supports of my declining age, I could not avoid repeating the famous story of Count Abensberg, who, in Henry the Second's progress through Germany, while other courtiers came with their treasures, brought his thirty-two children, and presented them to his sovereign as the most valuable offering he had to bestow. In this manner, though I had but six, I considered them as a very valuable present made to my country, and consequently looked upon it as my debtor. Our eldest son was named George, after his uncle, who left us ten thousand pounds. Our second child, a girl, I intended to call after her aunt Grissel; but my wife, who had been reading romances, insisted upon her being called Olivia. In less than another year we had another daughter, and now I was determined that Grissel should be her name; but a rich relation taking a fancy to stand godmother, the girl was, by her directions, called Sophia; so that we had two romantic names in the family; but I solemnly protest I had no hand in it. Moses was our next, and, after an interval of twelve years, we had two sons more.

It would be fruitless to deny my exultation when I saw my little ones about me; but the vanity and the satisfaction of my wife were even greater than mine. When our visitors would say, "Well, upon my word, Mrs. Primrose, you have the finest children in the whole country."—"Ay, neighbour," she would answer, "they are as heaven made them—handsome enough, if they be good enough; for handsome is that handsome does." And then she would bid the girls hold up their heads; who, to conceal nothing, were certainly very handsome. Mere outside is so very trifling a circumstance with me, that I should scarce have remembered to mention it had it not been a general topic of conversation in the country. Olivia, now about eighteen, had that luxuriancy of beauty with which painters generally draw Hebe; open, sprightly, and commanding. Sophia's features were not so striking at first, but often did more certain execution; for they were soft, modest, and alluring. The one vanquished by a single blow, the other by efforts successively repeated.

The temper of a woman is generally formed from the turn of her features; at least it was so with my daughters. Olivia wished for many lovers; Sophia to secure one. Olivia was often affected, from too great a desire to please: Sophia even repressed

excellence, from her fears to offend. The one entertained me with her vivacity when I was gay ; the other with her sense when I was serious. But these qualities were never carried to excess in either, and I have often seen them exchange characters for a whole day together. A suit of mourning has transformed my coquette into a prude, and a new set of ribbons has given her younger sister more than natural vivacity. My eldest son George was bred at Oxford, as I intended him for one of the learned professions. My second boy Moses, whom I designed for business, received a sort of miscellaneous education at home. But it is needless to attempt describing the particular characters of young people that had seen but very little of the world. In short, a family likeness prevailed through all ; and, properly speaking, they had but one character—that of being all equally generous, credulous, simple, and inoffensive.

The excellent Dr. Primrose, having lost the comfortable fortune which had maintained his family in dignity and ease, was forced to leave his old home and to take up his abode in a humble cottage on the estate of Squire Thornhill. The young Squire became a frequent visitor at the Vicar's house. He was warmly welcomed by the simple Mrs. Primrose, who hoped to secure him as a husband for her beautiful daughter Olivia.

Whatever might have been Sophia's sensations, the rest of the family were easily consoled for Mr. Burchell's absence by the company of our landlord, whose visits now became more frequent, and longer. Though he had been disappointed in procuring my daughters the amusements of the town, as he designed, he took every opportunity of supplying them with those little recreations which our retirement would admit of. He usually came in the morning ; and while my son and I followed our occupations abroad, he sat with the family at home, and amused them by describing the town, with every part of which he was particularly acquainted. He could repeat all the observations that were retailed in the atmosphere of the playhouses, and had all the good things of the high wits by rote, long before they made their way

into the jest-books. The intervals between conversation were employed in teaching my daughters piquet, or sometimes in setting my two little ones to box, to make them *sharp*, as he called it: but the hopes of having him for a son-in-law in some measure blinded us to all his imperfections. It must be owned, that my wife laid a thousand schemes to entrap him; or, to speak more tenderly, used every art to magnify the merit of her daughter. If the cakes at tea ate short and crisp, they were made by Olivia; if the gooseberry wine was well knit, the gooseberries were of her gathering: it was her fingers which gave the pickles their peculiar green; and, in the composition of a pudding, it was her judgment that mixed the ingredients. Then the poor woman would sometimes tell the squire, that she thought him and Olivia extremely of a size, and would bid both stand up, to see which was tallest. These instances of cunning, which she thought impenetrable, yet which everybody saw through, were very pleasing to our benefactor, who gave every day some new proofs of his passion, which, though they had not arisen to proposals of marriage, yet we thought fell but little short of it; and his slowness was attributed sometimes to native bashfulness, and sometimes to his fear of offending his uncle. An occurrence, however, which happened soon after, put it beyond a doubt that he designed to become one of our family; my wife even regarded it as an absolute promise.

My wife and daughters happening to return a visit at neighbour Flamborough's, found that family had lately got their pictures drawn by a limner, who travelled the country, and took likenesses for fifteen shillings a head. As this family and ours had long a sort of rivalry in point of taste, our spirit took the alarm at this stolen march upon us; and, notwithstanding all I could say, and I said much, it was resolved that we should have our pictures done too.

Having, therefore, engaged the limner,—for what could I do?—our next deliberation was to show the superiority of our taste in the attitudes. As for our neighbour's family, there were seven of them, and they were drawn with seven oranges,—a thing quite out of taste, no variety in life, no composition in the world. We desired to have something in a brighter style; and, after many debates, at length came to a unanimous resolution of

being drawn together, in one large historical family-piece. This would be cheaper, since one frame would serve for all, and it would be infinitely more genteel; for all families of any taste were now drawn in the same manner. As we did not immediately recollect an historical subject to hit us, we were contented each with being drawn as independent historical figures. My wife desired to be represented as Venus, and the painter was requested not to be too frugal of his diamonds in her stomacher and hair. Her two little ones were to be as Cupids by her side; while I, in my gown and band, was to present her with my books on the Whistonian controversy. Olivia would be drawn as an Amazon, sitting upon a bank of flowers, dressed in a green joseph, richly laced with gold, and a whip in her hand. Sophia was to be a shepherdess, with as many sheep as the painter could put in for nothing; and Moses was to be dressed out with a hat and white feather.

Our taste so much pleased the squire, that he insisted on being put in as one of the family, in the character of Alexander the Great, at Olivia's feet. This was considered by us all as an indication of his desire to be introduced into the family, nor could we refuse his request. The painter was therefore set to work, and, as he wrought with assiduity and expedition, in less than four days the whole was completed. The piece was large, and it must be owned he did not spare his colors; for which my wife gave him great encomiums. We were all perfectly satisfied with his performance; but an unfortunate circumstance, which had not occurred till the picture was finished, now struck us with dismay. It was so very large, that we had no place in the house to fix it. How we all came to disregard so material a point is inconceivable; but certain it is, we had all been greatly remiss. The picture, therefore, instead of gratifying our vanity, as we hoped, leaned in a most mortifying manner against the kitchen wall, where the canvas was stretched and painted, much too large to be got through any of the doors, and the jest of all our neighbors. One compared it to Robinson Crusoe's long-boat, too large to be removed; another thought it more resembled a reel in a bottle: some wondered how it could be got out, but still more were amazed how it ever got in.



## GIBBON.

THE two extracts from *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* present the characters of Charlemagne and of Mahomet. These selections illustrate the weight and value of Gibbon's judgment, and his clear and apt, though somewhat ponderous expression.

## CHARLEMAGNE.

The appellation of *Great* has been often bestowed, and sometimes deserved, but Charlemagne is the only prince in whose favor the title has been indissolubly blended with the name. That name, with the addition of saint, is inserted in the Roman calendar; and the saint, by a rare felicity, is crowned with the praises of the historians and philosophers of an enlightened age. His *real* merit is doubtless enhanced by the barbarism of the nation and the times from which he emerged: but the *apparent* magnitude of an object is likewise enlarged by an unequal comparison; and the ruins of Palmyra derive a casual splendor from the nakedness of the surrounding desert. Without injustice to his fame I may discern some blemishes in the sanctity and greatness of the restorer of the western empire. \* \* \* \*

I shall be scarcely permitted to accuse the ambition of a conqueror; but in a day of equal retribution, the sons of his brother Carloman, the Merovingian princes of Aquitain, and the four thousand five hundred Saxons who were beheaded on the same spot, would have something to allege against the justice and humanity of Charlemagne. His treatment of the vanquished Saxons was an abuse of the right of conquest: his laws were not less sanguinary than his arms, and in the discussion of his motives, whatever is subtracted from bigotry must be imputed to temper. The sedentary reader is amazed by his incessant activity of mind and body; and his subjects and enemies were not less astonished at his sudden presence, at the moment when they believed him at the most distant extremity of the empire; neither peace nor war, nor summer nor winter, were a season of



repose ; and our fancy cannot easily reconcile the annals of his reign with the geography of his expeditions. But this activity was a national, rather than a personal, virtue ; the vagrant life of a Frank was spent in the chase, in pilgrimage, in military adventures ; and the journeys of Charlemagne were distinguished only by a more numerous train and a more important purpose.

\* \* \* \* I touch with reverence the laws of Charlemagne, so highly applauded by a respectable judge. They compose not a system, but a series, of occasional and minute edicts, for the correction of abuses, the reformation of manners, the economy of his farms, the care of his poultry, and even the sale of his eggs. He wished to improve the laws and the character of the Franks ; and his attempts, however feeble and imperfect, are deserving of praise : the inveterate evils of the times were suspended or mollified by his government ; but in his institutions I can seldom discover the general views and the immortal spirit of a legislator, who survives himself for the benefit of posterity. The union and stability of his empire depended on the life of a single man : he imitated the dangerous practice of dividing his kingdoms amongst his sons ; and, after his numerous diets, the whole constitution was left to fluctuate between the disorders of anarchy and despotism. His esteem for the piety and knowledge of the clergy tempted him to intrust that aspiring order with temporal dominion and civil jurisdiction ; and his son Lewis, when he was stripped and degraded by the bishops, might accuse, in some measure, the imprudence of his father. His laws enforced the imposition of tithes, because the demons had proclaimed in the air that the default of payment had been the cause of the last scarcity.

The literary merits of Charlemagne are attested by the foundation of schools, the introduction of arts, the works which were published in his name, and his familiar connection with the subjects and strangers whom he invited to his court to educate both the prince and the people. His own studies were tardy, laborious, and imperfect ; if he spoke Latin and understood Greek, he derived the rudiments of knowledge from conversation, rather than from books : and in his mature age the emperor strove to acquire the practice of writing, which every peasant now learns in his infancy. The grammar and logic, the music and astronomy, of the

times, were only cultivated as the handmaids of superstition ; but the curiosity of the human mind must ultimately tend to its improvement, and the encouragement of learning reflects the purest and most pleasing lustre on the character of Charlemagne. The dignity of his person, the length of his reign, the prosperity of his arms, the vigor of his government, and the reverence of distant nations, distinguish him from the royal crowd ; and Europe dates a new era from his restoration of the western empire.

### MAHOMET.

According to the tradition of his companions, Mahomet was distinguished by the beauty of his person, an outward gift which is seldom despised, except by those to whom it has been refused. Before he spoke, the orator engaged on his side the affections of a public or private audience. They applauded his commanding presence, his majestic aspect, his piercing eye, his gracious smile, his flowing beard, his countenance that painted every sensation of the soul, and his gestures that enforced each expression of the tongue. In the familiar offices of life he scrupulously adhered to the grave and ceremonious politeness of his country : his respectful attention to the rich and powerful was dignified by his condescension and affability to the poorest citizens of Mecca : the frankness of his manner concealed the artifice of his views ; and the habits of courtesy were imputed to personal friendship or universal benevolence. His memory was capacious and retentive ; his wit easy and social, his imagination sublime ; his judgment clear, rapid, and decisive. He possessed the courage both of thought and action ; and, although his designs might gradually expand with his success, the first idea which he entertained of his divine mission bears the stamp of an original and superior genius. The son of Abdallah was educated in the bosom of the noblest race, in the use of the purest dialect of Arabia ; and the fluency of his speech was corrected and enhanced by the practice of discreet and seasonable silence. With these powers of eloquence, Mahomet was an illiterate Barbarian : his youth had never been instructed in the arts of reading and writing ; the common ignorance exempted him from shame or reproach, but

he was reduced to a narrow circle of existence, and deprived of those faithful mirrors, which reflect to our mind the minds of sages and heroes. Yet the book of nature and of man was open to his view ; and some fancy has been indulged in the political and philosophical observations which are ascribed to the Arabian traveller. He compares the nations and religions of the earth ; discovers the weakness of the Persian and Roman monarchies ; beholds, with pity and indignation, the degeneracy of the times ; and resolves to unite under one God and one king, the invincible spirit and primitive virtues of the Arabs. Our more accurate inquiry will suggest, that, instead of visiting the courts, the camps, the temples of the East, the two journeys of Mahomet into Syria were confined to the fairs of Bostra and Damascus ; that he was only thirteen years of age when he accompanied the caravan of his uncle ; and that his duty compelled him to return as soon as he had disposed of the merchandise of Cadijah. In these hasty and superficial excursions, the eye of genius might discern some objects invisible to his grosser companions ; some seeds of knowledge might be cast upon a fruitful soil ; but his ignorance of the Syriac language must have checked his curiosity ; and I cannot perceive in the life or writings of Mahomet, that his prospect was far extended beyond the limits of the Arabian world.

## BURNS.

THE following poem has been mentioned on page 174. Burns has put into ringing, defiant verse his proud self-respect and intense democratic spirit. *A Man's a Man for a' That* reveals the personal temper of the man, and also the influence of the time in which he lived :

### A MAN'S A MAN FOR A' THAT.

Is there, for honest Poverty,  
That hings his head, an' a' that?  
The coward-slave—we pass him by,  
We dare be poor for a' that!

For a' that, an' a' that,  
 Our toils obscure an' a' that,  
 The rank is but the guinea stamp,  
 The Man's the gowd for a' that.

What though on hamely fare we dine,  
 Wear hoddin grey, an' a' that;  
 Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,  
 A Man's a Man, for a' that:  
 For a' that, an' a' that,  
 Their tinsel show, an' a' that;  
 The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor,  
 Is king o' men, for a' that.

Ye see yon birkie ca'd "a lord,"  
 Wha struts, an' stares, and a' that;  
 Tho' hundreds worship at his word,  
 He's but a coof, for a' that:  
 For a' that, and a' that,  
 His ribband, star, an' a' that,  
 The man o' independent mind,  
 He looks an' laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak a belted knight,  
 A marquis, duke, an' a' that;  
 But an honest man's aboon his might,  
 Gude faith, he mauna fa' that!  
 For a' that, an' a' that,  
 Their dignities an' a' that;  
 The pith o' sense, an' pride o' worth,  
 Are higher rank than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,  
 (As come it will for a' that,)
 That Sense and Worth, o'er a' the earth,  
 May bear the gree, an' a' that;  
 For a' that, an' a' that,  
 It's coming yet, for a' that,  
 The Man to Man, the world o'er,  
 Shall brothers be for a' that.

The same fire animates the spirited poem that follows :

### ROBERT BRUCE'S MARCH TO BANNOCKBURN.

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,  
 Scots, wham Bruce has aften led,  
 Welcome to your gory bed,  
     Or to victorie.

Now's the day, and now's the hour;  
 See the front o' battle lour;  
 See approach proud Edward's power—  
     Chains and Slaverie!

Wha will be a traitor knave?  
 Wha can fill a coward's grave?  
 Wha sae base as be a Slave?  
     Let him turn and flee!

Wha, for Scotland's King and Law  
 Freedom's sword will strongly draw,  
 Freeman stand, or Freeman fa',  
     Let him on wi' me!

By Oppression's woes and pains!  
 By your Sons in servile chains!  
 We will drain our dearest veins,  
     But they *shall* be free!

Lay the proud usurpers low!  
 Tyrants fall in every foe!  
 Liberty's in every blow!  
     Let us do—or die!!!

Burns was a poet of many moods. The humor, archness, and grace of the following poem are inimitable :

### TAM GLEN.

My heart is a breaking, dear Tittie,  
 Some counsel unto me come len',  
 To anger them a' is a pity,  
     But what will I do wi' Tam Glen?



I'm thinking, wi' sic a braw fellow,  
 In poortith I might make a fen';  
 What care I in riches to wallow,  
 If I maunna marry Tam Glen?

There's Lowrie the laird o' Drumeller—  
 "Guid day to you"—brute! he comes ben:  
 He brags and he blaws o' his siller,  
 But when will he dance like Tam Glen?

My Minnie does constantly deave me,—  
 And bids me beware o' young men;  
 They flatter, she says, to deceive me,  
 But wha can think sae o' Tam Glen!

My daddie says, gin I'll forsake him,  
 He'll gie me gude hunder marks ten;  
 But, if it's ordain'd I maun tak him,  
 O wha will I get but Tam Glen?

Yestreen at the Valentine's dealing,  
 My heart to my mou gied a sten;  
 For thrice I drew ane without failing,  
 And thrice it was written "Tam Glen!"

The last Halloween I was waukin  
 My droukit sark-sleeve, as ye ken,  
 His likeness cam up the house staukin,  
 In the very gray breeks o' Tam Glen.

Some counsel, dear Tittie, don't tarry;  
 I'll gie ye my bonie black hen,  
 Gif ye will advise me to marry  
 The lad I lo'e dearly, Tam Glen.

The love songs of Burns, so simple, direct, and "heart-warm," are the poems that appeal most strongly to his readers. Of the following little poem, Burns himself said that he reckoned it one of his best songs.

## WILT THOU BE MY DEARIE?

Wilt thou be my Dearie?  
 When Sorrow wrings thy gentle heart,  
 O wilt thou let me cheer thee!  
 By the treasure of my soul,  
 That's the love I bear thee:  
 I swear and vow that only thou  
 Shall ever be my Dearie!  
 Only thou, I swear and vow,  
 Shall ever be my Dearie!

Lassie, say thou lo'es me;  
 Or, if thou wilt na be my ain,  
 Say na thou'lt refuse me!  
 If it winna, canna be,  
 Thou for thine may choose me,  
 Let me, lassie, quickly die,  
 Still trusting that thou lo'es me!  
 Lassie, let me quickly die,  
 Still trusting that thou lo'es me!

*The Birks of Aberfeldy* is one of the many poems in which Burns links together a little love story and pretty out-door scenes.

## THE BIRKS OF ABERFELDY.

*Chor.*—Bonie lassie, will ye go,  
 Will ye go, will ye go,  
 Bonie lassie, will ye go  
 To the birks of Aberfeldy!

Now Simmer blinks on flowery braes,  
 And o'er the crystal streamlets plays;  
 Come let us spend the lightsome days,  
 In the birks of Aberfeldy.  
 Bonie lassie, &c.

The little birdies blythely sing,  
 While o'er their heads the hazels hing,  
 Or lightly flit on wanton wing,  
     In the birks of Aberfeldy.  
                                 Bonie lassie, &c.

The braes ascend like lofty wa's,  
 The foamy stream deep-roaring fa's,  
 O'erhung wi' fragrant spreading shaws—  
     The birks of Aberfeldy.  
                                 Bonie lassie, &c.

The hoary cliffs are crown'd wi' flowers,  
 White o'er the linns the burnie pours,  
 And rising, weets wi' misty show'rs  
     The birks of Aberfeldy.  
                                 Bonie lassie, &c.

Let Fortune's gifts at random flee,  
 They ne'er shall draw a wish frae me,  
 Supremely blest wi' love and thee,  
     In the birks of Aberfeldy.  
                                 Bonie lassie, &c.

The next song is remarkable for its tenderness and its pathetic music. Mendelssohn composed a melody for these words.

#### O WERT THOU IN THE CAULD BLAST.

O wert thou in the cauld blast,  
     On yonder lea, on yonder lea,  
 My plaidie to the angry airt,  
     I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee ;  
 Or did Misfortune's bitter storms  
     Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,  
 Thy bield should be my bosom,  
     To share it a', to share it a'.

Or were I in the wildest waste,  
     Sae black and bare, sae black and bare,  
 The desert were a Paradise,  
     If thou wert there, if thou wert there.  
 Or were I Monarch o' the globe,  
     Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign,  
 The brightest jewel in my crown,  
     Wad be my queen, wad be my queen.

The next song is a favorite. The "Jean," in whose honor it was composed, was Jean Armour, whom Burns married.

#### OF A' THE AIRTS THE WIND CAN BLOW.

Of a' the airts the wind can blow,  
     I dearly like the west,  
 For there the bonie lassie lives,  
     The lassie I lo'e best:  
 There wild-woods grow, and rivers row,  
     And mony a hill between ;  
 By day and night my fancy's flight  
     Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,  
     I see her sweet and fair;  
 I hear her in the tunefu' birds,  
     I hear her charm the air;  
 There's not a bonie flower that springs  
     By fountain, shaw, or green;  
 There's not a bonie bird that sings,  
     But minds me o' my Jean.

The following brief extracts are characteristic stanzas of Burns:

The Muse, nae poet ever fand her,  
 Till by himsel' he learn'd to wander,  
 Adown some trottin' burn's meander,  
     An' no think lang:  
 O sweet to stray, an' pensive ponder  
     A heart-felt sang!

*Epistle to William Simson.*

Some rhyme a neibor's name to lash ;  
 Some rhyme (vain thought!) for needfu' cash;  
 Some rhyme to court the countra clash;  
                   An' raise a din ;  
 For me, an aim I never fash;  
                   I rhyme for fun!

*Epistle to James Smith.*

Auld comrade dear, and brither sinner,  
 How's a' the folk about Glenconnor?  
 How do you this blae eastlin wind,  
 That's like to blaw a body blind?  
 For me, my faculties are frozen.

\*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*

But first, before you see heaven's glory,  
 May ye get mony a merry story,  
 Mony a laugh and mony a drink,  
 An' ay eneugh o' needfu' clink.

Now fare ye weel, an' joy be wi' you;  
 For my sake, this I beg it o' you,  
 Assist poor Simson a' ye can,  
 Ye'll fin' him just an honest man;  
 Sae I conclude, and quat my chanter,  
 Yours, saint or sinner, ROB THE RANTER.

*Epistle to James Tennant.*

Say, was thy little mate unkind,  
 And heard thee as the careless wind?  
 Oh, nocht but love and sorrow join'd,  
   Sic notes o' woe could wauken!  
 Thou tells o' never-ending care;  
 O' speechless grief, and dark despair:  
 For pity's sake, sweet bird, nae mair!  
   Or my poor heart is broken.

*Address to the Woodlark.*

Then gently scan your brother man,  
   Still gentler sister woman;  
 Tho' they may gang a kennin' wrang,  
   To step aside is human:



One point must still be greatly dark,  
 The moving *Why* they do it;  
 And just as lamely can ye mark,  
 How far perhaps they rue it.

Who made the heart, 'tis He alone  
 Decidedly can try us;  
 He knows each chord, its various tone,  
 Each spring, its various bias:  
 Then at the balance let's be mute,  
 We never can adjust it;  
 What's done we partly may compute,  
 But know not what's resisted.

*Address to the Unco Guid.*

O wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us  
 To see oursel as ithers see us!  
 It wad frae monie a blunder free us,  
     An' foolish notion;  
 What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,  
     An' ev'n Devotion!

*To a Louse.*

I am naeboddy's lord,  
 I'll be slave to naeboddy;  
 I hae a gude braid sword,  
 I'll take dunts frae naeboddy.

I'll be merry and free,  
 I'll be sad for naeboddy;  
 Naeboddy cares for me,  
 I care for naeboddy.

*I Hae a Wife o' my Ain.*

## SCOTT.

THE following passage from *The Lady of the Lake* illustrates what has been said of the poem on page 184. We find here the richness of color which Ruskin pronounces one of the chief beauties of Scott's description. Every traveler who has visited Loch Katrine will answer for the exquisite faithfulness of these pictures.

The western waves of ebbing day  
Rolled o'er the glen their level way;  
Each purple peak, each flinty spire,  
Was bathed in floods of living fire.  
But not a setting beam could glow  
Within the dark ravines below,  
Where twined the path in shadow hid,  
Round many a rocky pyramid,  
Shooting abruptly from the dell  
Its thunder-splintered pinnacle ;  
Round many an insulated mass,  
The native bulwarks of the pass,  
Huge as the towers which builders vain  
Presumptuous piled on Shinar's plain.  
The rocky summits, split and rent,  
Formed turret, dome, or battlement,  
Or seemed fantastically set  
With cupola or minaret,  
Wild crests as pagod ever decked,  
Or mosque of Eastern architect.  
Nor were these earth-born castles bare,  
Nor lacked they many a banner fair ;  
For, from their shivered brows displayed,  
Far o'er the unfathomable glade,  
All twinkling with the dew-drops' sheen,  
The brier-rose fell in streamers green,  
And creeping shrubs, of thousand dyes,  
Waved in the west-wind's summer sighs.

Boon nature scattered, free and wild,  
Each plant or flower, the mountain's child.  
Here eglantine embalmed the air,  
Hawthorn and hazel mingled there ;  
The primrose pale and violet flower,  
Found in each cliff a narrow bower ;  
Foxglove and nightshade, side by side,  
Emblems of punishment and pride,  
Grouped their dark hues with every stain  
The weather-beaten crags retain,  
With boughs that quaked at every breath,  
Grey birch and aspen wept beneath ;  
Aloft, the ash and warrior oak  
Cast anchor in the rifted rock ;  
And, higher yet, the pine tree hung  
His shattered trunk, and frequent flung,  
Where seemed the cliffs to meet on high,  
His bows athwart the narrowed sky.  
Highest of all, where white peaks glanced,  
Where glistening streamers waved and danced,  
The wanderer's eye could barely view  
The summer heaven's delicious blue ;  
So wondrous wild, the whole might seem  
The scenery of a fairy dream.

Onward, amid the copse 'gan peep  
A narrow inlet, still and deep,  
Affording scarce such breadth of brim,  
As served the wild-duck's brood to swim.  
Lost for a space, through thickets veering,  
But broader when again appearing,  
Tall rocks and tufted knolls their face  
Could on the dark-blue mirror trace ;  
And farther as the hunter strayed,  
Still broader sweep its channels made.  
The shaggy mounds no longer stood,  
Emerging from entangled wood,  
But, wave-encircled, seemed to float,  
Like castle girdled with its moat ;  
Yet broader floods extending still  
Divide them from their parent hill,

Till each, retiring, claims to be  
An islet in an inland sea.

And now, to issue from the glen,  
No pathway meets the wanderer's ken,  
Unless he climb, with footing nice,  
A far projecting precipice.  
The broom's tough roots his ladder made,  
The hazel saplings lent their aid ;  
And thus an airy point he won,  
Where, gleaming with the setting sun,  
One burnished sheet of living gold,  
Loch Katrine lay beneath him rolled,  
In all her length far winding lay,  
With promontory, creek, and bay,  
And islands that, empurpled bright,  
Floated amid the livelier light,  
And mountains, that like giants stand,  
To sentinel enchanted land.  
High on the south, huge Benvenue  
Down on the lake in masses threw  
Crag, knolls, and mounds, confusedly hurled,  
The fragments of an earlier world ;  
A wildering forest feathered o'er  
His ruined sides and summit hoar,  
While on the north, through middle air,  
Ben-an heaved high his forehead bare.

*The Lady of the Lake, Canto I.*

The following selection from *Marmion* shows the other marked characteristic of the poet Scott : his spirited and picturesque narrative verse. The battle of Flodden took place in 1513, and resulted in the overwhelming defeat of the Scotch and the loss of the best blood of their nation. The *Marmion* of Scott's poem is a fictitious character. The famous critic, Jeffrey, said of this passage : " Of all the poetical battles which have been fought, from the days of Homer to those of Mr. Southey, there is none, in our opinion, at all comparable, for interest and animation,—for breadth of drawing and magnificence of effect,—

with this of Mr. Scott's." A more recent and critical comparison of Homer and Scott may be found in Matthew Arnold's lectures "On Translating Homer."

Blount and Fitz-Eustace rested still  
With Lady Clare upon the hill,  
On which—for far the day was spent—  
The western sunbeams now were bent;  
The cry they heard, its meaning knew,  
Could plain their distant comrades view:  
Sadly to Blount did Eustace say,  
"Unworthy office here to stay!

No hope of gilded spurs to-day.—  
But see! look up—on Flodden bent  
The Scottish foe has fired his tent."

And sudden, as he spoke,  
From the sharp ridges of the hill,  
All downward to the banks of Till,  
Was wreathed in sable smoke.  
Volumed and vast, and rolling far,  
The cloud enveloped Scotland's war  
As down the hill they broke;  
Nor martial shout, nor minstrel tone,  
Announced their march; their tread alone,  
At times one warning trumpet blown,  
At times a stifled hum,  
Told England, from his mountain-throne  
King James did rushing come.

Scarce could they hear or see their foes  
Until at weapon-point they close.—  
They close in clouds of smoke and dust,  
With sword-sway and with lance's thrust;

And such a yell was there,  
Of sudden and portentous birth,  
As if men fought upon the earth,  
And fiends in upper air;

Oh! life and death were in the shout,  
Recoil and rally, charge and rout,

And triumph and despair.  
Long looked the anxious squires; their eye  
Could in the darkness nought descry.



At length the freshening western blast  
Aside the shroud of battle cast ;  
And first the ridge of mingled spears  
Above the brightening cloud appears,  
And in the smoke the pennons flew,  
As in the storm the white seamew.  
Then marked they, dashing broad and far,  
The broken billows of the war,  
And plumed crests of chieftains brave  
Floating like foam upon the wave ;

But nought distinct they see :  
Wide raged the battle on the plain ;  
Spears shook and falchions flashed amain ;  
Fell England's arrow-flight like rain ;  
Crests rose, and stooped, and rose again,

Wild and disorderly.  
Amid the scene of tumult, high  
They saw Lord Marmion's falcon fly ;  
And stainless Tunstall's banner white,  
And Edmund Howard's lion bright,  
Still bear them bravely in the fight,

Although against them come  
Of gallant Gordons many a one,  
And many a stubborn Badenoch-man,  
And many a rugged Border clan,  
With Huntly and with Home.

Far on the left, unseen the while,  
Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle,  
Though there the western mountaineer  
Rushed with bare bosom on the spear,  
And flung the feeble targe aside,  
And with both hands the broadsword plied.  
'Twas vain.—But Fortune, on the right,  
With fickle smile cheered Scotland's fight.  
Then fell that spotless banner white,

The Howard's lion fell ;  
Yet still Lord Marmion's falcon flew  
With wavering flight, while fiercer grew  
Around the battle-yell.

The Border slogan rent the sky!  
A Home! A Gordon! was the cry:  
Loud were the clanging blows;  
Advanced,—forced back,—now low, now high,  
The pennon sunk and rose;  
As bends the bark's mast in the gale,  
When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,  
It wavered 'mid the foes.  
No longer Blount the view could bear:  
"By heaven and all its saints! I swear  
I will not see it lost!  
Fitz-Eustace, you with Lady Clare  
May bid your beads and patter prayer,—  
I gallop to the host."  
And to the fray he rode amain,  
Followed by all the archer train.  
The fiery youth, with desperate charge,  
Made for a space an opening large,—  
The rescued banner rose,—  
But darkly closed the war around,  
Like pine-tree rooted from the ground  
It sank among the foes.  
Then Eustace mounted too,—yet stayed,  
As loath to leave the helpless maid,  
When, fast as shaft can fly,  
Bloodshot his eyes, his nostrils spread,  
The loose rein dangling from his head,  
Housing and saddle bloody red,  
Lord Marmion's steed rushed by;  
And Eustace, maddening at the sight,  
A look and sign to Clara cast  
To mark he would return in haste,  
Then plunged into the fight.

Ask me not what the maiden feels,  
Left in that dreadful hour alone:  
Perchance her reason stoops or reels;  
Perchance a courage, not her own,  
Braces her mind to desperate tone.—  
The scattered van of England wheels;—

She only said, as loud in air  
 The tumult roared, "Is Wilton there?"  
 They fly, or, maddened by despair,  
 Fight but to die,—“Is Wilton there?”  
 With that, straight up the hill there rode  
 Two horsemen drenched with gore,  
 And in their arms, a helpless load,  
 A wounded knight they bore.  
 His hand still strained the broken brand;  
 His arms were smeared with blood and sand.  
 Dragged from among the horses' feet,  
 With dented shield and helmet beat,  
 The falcon-crest and plumage gone,  
 Can that be haughty Marmion! . . .  
 Young Blount his armor did unlace,  
 And, gazing on his ghastly face,  
 Said, “By Saint George, he's gone!  
 That spear-wound has our master sped,  
 And see the deep cut on his head!  
 Good-night to Marmion.”—  
 “Unnurtured Blount! thy brawling cease:  
 He opes his eyes,” said Eustace; “peace!”

When, doffed his casque, he felt free air,  
 Around 'gan Marmion wildly stare:  
 “Where's Harry Blount? Fitz-Eustace where?  
 Linger ye here, ye hearts of hare!  
 Redeem my pennon,—charge again!  
 Cry, ‘Marmion to the rescue!’—Vain!  
 Last of my race, on battle-plain  
 That shout shall ne'er be heard again!—  
 Yet my last thought is England's—fly,  
 To Dacre bear my signet-ring;  
 Tell him his squadrons up to bring.—  
 Fitz-Eustace, to Lord Surrey hie:  
 Tunstall lies dead upon the field,  
 His lifeblood stains the spotless shield;  
 Edmund is down; my life is reft;  
 The Admiral alone is left.  
 Let Stanley charge with spur of fire,—  
 With Chester charge, and Lancashire,

Full upon Scotland's central host,  
 Or victory and England's lost.—  
 Must I bid twice ?—hence, varlets! fly!—  
 Leave Marmion here alone—to die.”

\* \* \* \* \*

The war, that for a space did fail,  
 Now trebly thundering swelled the gale,  
 And “Stanley!” was the cry.—  
 A light on Marmion's visage spread,  
 And fired his glazing eye;  
 With dying hand above his head  
 He shook the fragment of his blade,  
 And shouted “Victory!—  
 Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!”  
 Were the last words of Marmion.

By this, though deep the evening fell,  
 Still rose the battle's deadly swell,  
 For still the Scots around their king,  
 Unbroken, fought in desperate ring.

\* \* \* \* \*

But as they left the darkening heath  
 More desperate grew the strife of death.  
 The English shafts in volleys hailed,  
 In headlong charge their horse assailed;  
 Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons sweep  
 To break the Scottish circle deep  
 That fought around their king.  
 But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,  
 Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,  
 Though billmen ply the ghastly blow,  
 Unbroken was the ring;  
 The stubborn spearmen still made good  
 Their dark impenetrable wood,  
 Each stepping where his comrade stood  
 The instant that he fell.  
 No thought was there of dastard flight;  
 Linked in the serried phalanx tight,  
 Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,  
 As fearlessly and well,

Till utter darkness closed her wing  
 O'er their thin host and wounded king.  
 Then skilful Surrey's sage commands  
 Led back from strife his shattered bands;  
     And from the charge they drew,  
 As mountain-waves from wasted lands  
     Sweep back to ocean blue.  
 Then did their loss his foemen know;  
 Their king, their lords, their mightiest low,  
 They melted from the field as snow,  
 When streams are swoln and south winds blow,  
     Dissolves in silent dew.  
 Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless plash,  
     While many a broken band  
 Disordered through her currents dash,  
     To gain the Scottish land;  
 To town and tower, to down and dale,  
 To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,  
 And raise the universal wail.  
 Tradition, legend, tune, and song  
 Shall many an age that wail prolong;  
 Still from the sire the son shall hear  
 Of the stern strife and carnage drear  
     Of Flodden's fatal field,  
 Where shivered was fair Scotland's spear  
     And broken was her shield!

*Marmion, Canto VI.*

The following extract from *Kenilworth* describes Queen Elizabeth's arrival at the Castle, on the occasion of her famous visit to her favorite Leicester. The pupil, in reading the passage, should consider the application of the remarks upon page 184 and page 185.

It was the twilight of a summer night (9th July, 1575), the sun having for some time set, and all were in anxious expectation of the Queen's immediate approach. The multitude had remained assembled for many hours, and their numbers were still rather on the increase. A profuse distribution of refreshments, together with roasted oxen, and barrels of ale set a-broach in different



places of the road, had kept the populace in perfect love and loyalty towards the Queen and her favourite, which might have somewhat abated had fasting been added to watching. They passed away the time, therefore, with the usual popular amusements of whooping, hallooing, shrieking, and playing rude tricks upon each other, forming the chorus of discordant sounds usual on such occasions. These prevailed all through the crowded roads and fields, and especially beyond the gate of the Chase, where the greater number of the common sort were stationed; when, all of a sudden, a single rocket was seen to shoot into the atmosphere, and, at the instant, far-heard over flood and field, the great bell of the Castle tolled.

Immediately there was a pause of dead silence, succeeded by a deep hum of expectation, the united voice of many thousands, none of whom spoke above their breath; or, to use a singular expression, the whisper of an immense multitude.

"They come now, for certain," said Raleigh. "Tressilian, that sound is grand. We hear it from this distance, as mariners, after a long voyage, hear, upon their night-watch, the tide rush upon some distant and unknown shore."

\* \* \* \* \*

His farther meditations were interrupted by a shout of applause from the multitude, so tremendously vociferous, that the country echoed for miles round. The guards, thickly stationed upon the road by which the Queen was to advance, caught up the acclamation, which ran like wildfire to the Castle, and announced to all within, that Queen Elizabeth had entered the Royal Chase of Kenilworth. The whole music of the Castle sounded at once, and a round of artillery, with a salvo of small arms, was discharged from the battlements; but the noise of drums and trumpets, and even of the cannon themselves, was but faintly heard, amidst the roaring and reiterated welcomes of the multitude.

As the noise began to abate, a broad glare of light was seen to appear from the gate of the Park, and, broadening and brightening as it came nearer, advanced along the open and fair avenue that led towards the Gallery-tower; and which, as we have already noticed, was lined on either hand by the retainers of the Earl of Leicester. The word was passed along the line, "The Queen! The Queen! Silence, and stand fast!" Onward came

the cavalcade, illuminated by two hundred thick waxen torches, in the hands of as many horsemen, which cast a light like that of broad day all around the procession, but especially on the principal group, of which the Queen herself, arrayed in the most splendid manner, and blazing with jewels, formed the central figure. She was mounted on a milk-white horse, which she reined with peculiar grace and dignity ; and in the whole of her stately and noble carriage, you saw the daughter of an hundred kings.

The ladies of the court, who rode beside her Majesty, had taken especial care that their own external appearance should not be more glorious than their rank and the occasion altogether demanded, so that no inferior luminary might appear to approach the orbit of royalty. But their personal charms, and the magnificence by which, under every prudential restraint, they were necessarily distinguished, exhibited them, as the very flower of a realm so far famed for splendour and beauty. The magnificence of the courtiers, free from such restraints as prudence imposed on the ladies, was yet more unbounded.

Leicester, who glittered like a golden image with jewels and cloth of gold, rode on her Majesty's right hand, as well in quality of her host, as of her Master of the Horse. The black steed which he mounted had not a single white hair on his body, and was one of the most renowned chargers in Europe, having been purchased by the Earl at large expense for this royal occasion. As the noble animal chafed at the slow pace of the procession, and, arching his stately neck, champed on the silver bits which restrained him, the foam flew from his mouth, and specked his well-formed limbs as if with spots of snow. The rider well became the high place which he held, and the proud steed which he bestrode ; for no man in England, or perhaps in Europe, was more perfect than Dudley in horsemanship, and all other exercises belonging to his quality. He was bare-headed, as were all the courtiers in the train ; and the red torchlight shone upon his long curled tresses of dark hair, and on his noble features, to the beauty of which even the severest criticism could only object the lordly fault, as it may be termed, of a forehead somewhat too high. On that proud evening, those features wore all the grateful solicitude of a subject, to shew himself sensible of the high honour which the

Queen was conferring on him, and all the pride and satisfaction which became so glorious a moment. Yet, though neither eye nor feature betrayed aught but feelings which suited the occasion, some of the Earl's personal attendants remarked, that he was unusually pale, and they expressed to each other their fear that he was taking more fatigue than consisted with his health.

Varney followed close behind his master, as the principal esquire in waiting, and had charge of his lordship's black velvet bonnet, garnished with a clasp of diamonds, and surmounted by a white plume. He kept his eye constantly on his master; and, for reasons with which the reader is not unacquainted, was, among Leicester's numerous dependents, the one who was most anxious that his lord's strength and resolution should carry him successfully through a day so agitating. For, although Varney was one of the few—the very few moral monsters, who contrive to lull to sleep the remorse of their own bosoms, and are drugged into moral insensibility by atheism, as men in extreme agony are lulled by opium, yet he knew that in the breast of his patron there was already awakened the fire that is never quenched, and that his lord felt, amid all the pomp and magnificence we have described, the gnawing of the worm that dieth not. Still, however, assured as Lord Leicester stood, by Varney's own intelligence, that his Countess laboured under an indisposition which formed an unanswerable apology to the Queen for her not appearing at Kenilworth, there was little danger, his wily retainer thought, that a man so ambitious would betray himself by giving way to any external weakness.

The train, male and female, who attended immediately upon the Queen's person, were of course of the bravest and the fairest,—the highest born nobles, and the wisest counsellors, of that distinguished reign, to repeat whose names were but to weary the reader. Behind came a long crowd of knights and gentlemen, whose rank and birth, however distinguished, were thrown into shade, as their persons into the rear of a procession, whose front was of such august majesty.

Thus marshalled, the cavalcade approached the Gallery-tower, which formed, as we have often observed, the extreme barrier of the Castle.

\* \* \* \* \*

Elizabeth received most graciously the homage of the herculean porter, and, bending her head to him in requital, passed through his guarded tower, from the top of which was poured a clamorous blast of warlike music, which was replied to by other bands of minstrelsy placed at different points on the Castle walls, and by others again stationed in the Chase; while the tones of the one, as they yet vibrated on the echoes, were caught up and answered by new harmony from different quarters.

Amidst these bursts of music, which, as if the work of enchantment, seemed now closè at hand, now softened by distant space, now wailing so low and sweet as if that distance were gradually prolonged until only the last lingering strains could reach the ear, Queen Elizabeth crossed the Gallery-tower, and came upon the long bridge, which extended from thence to Mortimer's Tower, and which was already as light as day, so many torches had been fastened to the pallisades on either side. Most of the nobles here alighted, and sent their horses to the neighbouring village of Kenilworth, following the Queen on foot, as did the gentlemen who had stood in array to receive her at the Gallery-tower.

Meanwhile, the Queen had no sooner stepped on the bridge than a new spectacle was provided; for as soon as the music gave signal that she was so far advanced, a raft, so disposed as to resemble a small floating island, illuminated by a great variety of torches, and surrounded by floating pageants formed to represent sea-horses, on which sat Tritons, Nereids, and other fabulous deities of the seas and rivers, made its appearance upon the lake, and issuing from behind a small heronry where it had been concealed, floated gently towards the farther end of the bridge.

On the islet appeared a beautiful woman, clad in a watchet-coloured silken mantle, bound with a broad girdle, inscribed with characters like the phylacteries of the Hebrews. Her feet and arms were bare, but her wrists and ankles were adorned with gold bracelets of uncommon size. Amidst her long silky black hair, she wore a crown or chaplet of artificial mistletoe, and bore in her hand a rod of ebony tipped with silver. Two Nymphs attended on her, dressed in the same antique and mystical guise.

The pageant was so well managed, that this Lady of the Float-



ing Island, having performed her voyage with much picturesque effect, landed at Mortimer's Tower with her two attendants, just as Elizabeth presented herself before that outwork. The stranger then, in a well-penned speech, announced herself as that famous Lady of the Lake, renowned in the stories of King Arthur, who had nursed the youth of the redoubted Sir Lancelot, and whose beauty had proved too powerful both for the wisdom and the spells of the mighty Merlin. Since that early period she had remained possessed of her crystal dominions, she said, despite the various men of fame and might by whom Kenilworth had been successively tenanted. The Saxons, the Danes, the Normans, the Saintlowes, the Clintons, the Mountforts, the Mortimers, the Plantagenets, great though they were in arms and magnificence, had never, she said, caused her to raise her head from the waters which hid her crystal palace. But a greater than all these great names had now appeared, and she came in homage and duty to welcome the peerless Elizabeth to all sport, which the Castle and its environs, which lake or land, could afford.

The Queen received this address also with great courtesy, and made answer in raillery, "We thought this lake had belonged to our own dominions, fair dame; but since so famed a lady claims it for hers, we will be glad at some other time to have farther communing with you touching our joint interests."

With this gracious answer the Lady of the Lake vanished, and Arion, who was amongst the maritime deities, appeared upon his dolphin. But Lambourne, who had taken upon him the part in the absence of Wayland, being chilled with remaining immersed in an element to which he was not friendly, having never got his speech by heart, and not having, like the porter, the advantage of a prompter, paid it off with impudence, tearing off his vizard, and swearing, "Cogs bones! he was none of Arion or Orion either, but honest Mike Lambourne, that had been drinking her Majesty's health from morning till midnight, and was come to bid her heartily welcome to Kenilworth Castle."

This unpremeditated buffoonery answered the purpose probably better than the set speech would have done. The Queen laughed heartily, and swore (in her turn) that he had made the best speech she had heard that day. Lambourne, who instantly saw his jest had saved his bones, jumped on shore, gave his dol-



phin a kick, and declared he would never meddle with fish again, except at dinner.

At the same time that the Queen was about to enter the Castle, that memorable discharge of fireworks by water and land took place, which Master Laneham, formerly introduced to the reader, has strained all his eloquence to describe.

“Such,” says the Clerk of the Council-chamber door, “was the blaze of burning darts, the gleams of stars coruscant, the streams and hail of fiery sparks, lightnings of wildfire, and flight-shot of thunder-bolts, with continuance, terror, and vehemency, that the heavens thundered, the waters surged, and the earth shook ; and, for my part, hardy as I am, it made me very vengeably afraid.”

## BYRON.

BYRON's relation to Nature has been mentioned on page 193. The following stanzas show distinctly the spirit of the man: his joy in communing with mountains and ocean, and again his morbid fondness for calling himself “a thing restless and worn.”

Where rose the mountains, there to him were friends;  
Where roll'd the ocean, thereon was his home;  
Where a blue sky, and glowing clime, extends,  
He had the passion and the power to roam;  
The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,  
Were unto him companionship; they spake  
A mutual language, clearer than the tome  
Of his land's tongue, which he would oft forsake  
For Nature's pages glass'd by sunbeams on the lake.

Like the Chaldean, he could watch the stars,  
Till he had peopled them with beings bright  
As their own beams; and earth, and earth-born jars,  
And human frailties, were forgotten quite:  
Could he have kept his spirit to that flight  
He had been happy; but this clay will sink  
Its spark immortal, envying it the light  
To which it mounts, as if to break the link  
That keeps us from yon heaven which woos us to its brink.

But in Man's dwellings he became a thing  
 Restless and worn, and stern and wearisome,  
 Droop'd as a wild-born falcon with clipp'd wing,  
 To whom the boundless air alone were home:  
 Then came his fit again, which to o'ercome,  
 As eagerly the barr'd-up bird will beat  
 His breast and beak against his wiry dome  
 Till the blood tinge his plumage, so the heat  
 Of his impeded soul would through his bosom eat.

*Childe Harold, Canto III.*

To the student and the traveler, Byron's descriptions of places famous in history afford more pleasure than any other part of his works. The imaginative reader will find much to enjoy in the following picturesque and suggestive description of the Coliseum at Rome:

And here the buzz of eager nations ran,  
 In murmur'd pity, or loud-roar'd applause,  
 As man was slaughter'd by his fellow man.  
 And wherefore slaughter'd? wherefore, but because  
 Such were the bloody Circus' genial laws,  
 And the imperial pleauré.—Wherefore not?  
 What matters where we fall to fill the maws  
 Of worms—on battle-plains or listed spot?  
 Both are but theatres where the chief actors rot.

I see before me the Gladiator lie:  
 He leans upon his hand—his manly brow  
 Consents to death, but conquers agony,  
 And his droop'd head sinks gradually low—  
 And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow  
 From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,  
 Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now  
 The arena swims around him—he is gone,  
 Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch who won.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes  
 Were with his heart, and that was far away;  
 He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,  
 But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,

*There* were his young barbarians all at play,  
*There* was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,  
Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday—  
All this rush'd with his blood—Shall he expire  
And unavenged?—Arise! ye Goths, and glut your ire!

But here, where Murder breathed her bloody steam;  
And here, where buzzing nations choked the ways,  
And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain stream  
Dashing or winding as its torrent strays;  
Here, where the Roman millions' blame or praise  
Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd,  
My voice sounds much—and fall the stars' faint rays  
On the arena void—seats crush'd—walls bow'd—  
And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely loud.

A ruin—yet what ruin! from its mass  
Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been rear'd;  
Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,  
And marvel where the spoil could have appear'd.  
Hath it indeed been plunder'd, or but clear'd?  
Alas! develop'd, opens the decay,  
When the colossal fabric's form is near'd:  
It will not bear the brightness of the day,  
Which streams too much on all years, man, have reft away.

But when the rising moon begins to climb  
Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there;  
When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,  
And the low night-breeze waves along the air  
The garland-forest, which the gray walls wear,  
Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head;  
When the light shines serene but doth not glare,  
Then in this magic circle raise the dead:  
Heroes have trod this spot—'tis on their dust ye tread.

“While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand;  
When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall;  
And when Rome falls—the World.” From our own land  
Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall

In Saxon times, which we are wont to call  
 Ancient; and these three mortal things are still  
 On their foundations, and unalter'd all;  
 Rome and her Ruin past Redemption's skill,  
 The World, the same wide den—of thieves, or what ye will.

*Childe Harold, Canto IV.*

*Mazeppa* is a piece of narrative verse, illustrating the ease, energy, and picturesqueness of Byron's best style. The young hero, Mazeppa, for certain misconduct, meets a terrible punishment. He is bound naked upon the back of a wild horse and sent riding away to his death. After the terrible ride described in the following stanzas, he was found senseless by the Cossacks, who brought him back to life, and years after made him their prince and leader.

“Bring forth the horse!”—the horse was brought;  
 In truth, he was a noble steed,  
 A Tartar of the Ukraine breed,  
 Who look'd as though the speed of thought  
 Were in his limbs; but he was wild,  
 Wild as the wild deer, and untaught,  
 With spur and bridle undefiled—  
 'Twas but a day he had been caught;  
 And snorting, with erected mane,  
 And struggling fiercely, but in vain,  
 In the full foam of wrath and dread  
 To me the desert-born was led:  
 They bound me on, that menial throng,  
 Upon his back with many a thong;  
 They loosed him with a sudden lash—  
 Away!—away!—and on we dash!—  
 Torrents less rapid and less rash.

Away!—away!—My breath was gone—  
 I saw not where he hurried on:  
 'Twas scarcely yet the break of day,  
 And on he foam'd—away!—away!—  
 The last of human sounds which rose,  
 As I was darted from my foes,

Was the wild shout of savage laughter,  
Which on the wind came roaring after  
A moment from that rabble rout:  
With sudden wrath I wrench'd my head,  
    And snapp'd the cord, which to the mane  
    Had bound my neck, in lieu of rein,  
And writhing half my form about,  
Howl'd back my curse; but 'midst the tread,  
The thunder of my courser's speed,  
Perchance they did not hear nor heed:  
It vexes me—for I would fain  
Have paid their insult back again.  
I paid it well in after days:  
There is not of that castle gate,  
Its drawbridge and porteullis' weight,  
Stone, bar, moat, bridge, or barrier left;  
Nor of its fields a blade of grass,  
    Save what grows on a ridge of wall,  
    Where stood the hearth-stone of the hall.

Away, away, my steed and I,  
    Upon the pinions of the wind,  
    All human dwellings left behind;  
We sped like meteors through the sky,  
When with its crackling sound the night  
Is checker'd with the northern light:  
Town—village—none were on our track,  
    But a wild plain of far extent,  
And bounded by a forest black;  
    And, save the scarce seen battlement  
On distant heights of some strong hold,  
Against the Tartars built of old,  
No trace of man. The year before  
A Turkish army had march'd o'er;  
And where the Spahi's hoof hath trod,  
The verdure flies the bloody sod:—  
The sky was dull, and dim, and gray,  
    And a low breeze crept moaning by—  
    I could have answer'd with a sigh—  
But fast we fled, away, away—  
And I could neither sigh nor pray;



And my cold sweat-drops fell like rain  
Upon the courser's bristling mane;  
But, snorting still with rage and fear,  
He flew upon his far career;  
At times I almost thought, indeed,  
He must have slacken'd in his speed;  
But no—my bound and slender frame

Was nothing to his angry might,  
And merely like a spur became:  
Each motion which I made to free  
My swoln limbs from their agony  
Increased his fury and affright:  
I tried my voice,—'twas faint and low,  
But yet he swerved as from a blow;  
And, starting to each accent, sprang  
As from a sudden trumpet's clang:  
Meantime my cords were wet with gore,  
Which, oozing through my limbs, ran o'er;  
And in my tongue the thirst became  
A something fierier far than flame.

We near'd the wild wood—'twas so wide,  
I saw no bounds on either side.  
The boughs gave way, and did not tear  
My limbs; and I found strength to bear  
My wounds, already scarr'd with cold—  
My bonds forbade to loose my hold.  
We rustled through the leaves like wind,  
Left shrubs, and trees, and wolves behind;  
By night I heard them on the track,  
Their troop came hard upon our back,  
With their long gallop, which can tire  
The hound's deep hate, and hunter's fire:  
Where'er we flew they follow'd on,  
Nor left us with the morning sun;  
Behind I saw them, scarce a rood,  
At daybreak winding through the wood,  
And through the night had heard their feet  
Their stealing, rustling step repeat.  
Oh! how I wish'd for spear or sword,  
At least to die amidst the horde.

And perish—if it must be so—  
At bay, destroying many a foe.  
When first my courser's race begun,  
I wish'd the goal already won;  
But now I doubted strength and speed.  
Vain doubt! his swift and savage breed  
Had nerved him like the mountain-roe;  
Nor faster falls the blinding snow  
Which whelms the peasant near the door  
Whose threshold he shall cross no more,  
Bewilder'd with the dazzling blast,  
Than through the forest-paths he pass'd—  
Untired, untamed, and worse than wild;  
All furious as a favor'd child  
Balk'd of its wish; or fiercer still—  
A woman piqued—who has her will.

The wood was pass'd; 'twas more than noon,  
But chill the air, although in June;  
Or it might be my veins ran cold—  
Prolong'd endurance tames the bold;  
And I was then not what I seem,  
But headlong as a wintry stream,  
And wore my feelings out before  
I well could count their causes o'er:  
And what with fury, fear, and wrath,  
The tortures which beset my path,  
Cold, hunger, sorrow, shame, distress,  
Thus bound in nature's nakedness;  
Sprung from a race whose rising blood  
When stirr'd beyond its calmer mood,  
And trodden hard upon, is like  
The rattlesnake's, in act to strike,  
What marvel if this worn-out trunk  
Beneath its woes a moment sunk?  
The earth gave way, the skies roll'd round,  
I seem'd to sink upon the ground;  
But err'd, for I was fastly bound.  
My heart turn'd sick, my brain grew sore,  
And throb'd awhile, then beat no more:

The skies spun like a mighty wheel;  
 I saw the trees like drunkards reel,  
 And a slight flash sprang o'er my eyes,  
 Which saw no farther: he who dies  
 Can die no more than then I died.  
 O'ertortured by that ghastly ride,  
 I felt the blackness come and go,

And strove to wake; but could not make  
 My senses climb up from below:  
 I felt as on a plank at sea,  
 When all the waves that dash o'er thee,  
 At the same time upheave and whelm,  
 And hurl thee towards a desert realm:  
 My undulating life was as  
 The fancied lights that flitting pass  
 Our shut eyes in deep midnight, when  
 Fever begins upon the brain;  
 But soon it pass'd, with little pain,

But a confusion worse than such:

I own that I should deem it much,  
 Dying, to feel the same again;  
 And yet I do suppose we must  
 Feel far more ere we turn to dust:  
 No matter; I have bared my brow  
 Full in Death's face—before—and now.

My thoughts came back; where was I? Cold,  
 And numb, and giddy: pulse by pulse  
 Life reassumed its lingering hold,  
 And throb by throb: till grown a pang

Which for a moment would convulse,

My blood reflow'd, though thick and chill;  
 My ear with uncouth noises rang,

My heart began once more to thrill;  
 My sight return'd, though dim; alas!  
 And thicken'd, as it were, with glass.  
 Methought the dash of waves was nigh;  
 There was a gleam too of the sky,  
 Studded with stars;—it is no dream;  
 The wild horse swims the wilder stream!

The bright broad river's gushing tide  
Sweeps, winding onward, far and wide,  
And we are half-way, struggling o'er  
To yon unknown and silent shore.

The waters broke my hollow trance,  
And with a temporary strength

My stiffen'd limbs were rebaptized.  
My courser's broad breast proudly braves,  
And dashes off the ascending waves,  
And onward we advance!

We reach the slippery shore at length,

A haven I but little prized,  
For all behind was dark and drear,  
And all before was night and fear.  
How many hours of night or day  
In those suspended pangs I lay,  
I could not tell; I scarcely knew  
If this were human breath I drew.

With glossy skin and dripping mane,  
And reeling limbs, and reeking flank,  
The wild steed's sinewy nerves still strain  
Up the repelling bank.

We gain the top: a boundless plain  
Spreads through the shadow of the night,

And onward, onward, onward, seems,  
Like precipices in our dreams,

To stretch beyond the sight;  
And here and there a speck of white,

Or scatter'd spot of dusky green,  
In masses broke into the light,  
As rose the moon upon my right.

Onward we went—but slack and slow;

His savage force at length o'erspent,  
The drooping courser, faint and low,

All feebly foaming went.  
A sickly infant had had power  
To guide him forward in that hour;

But useless all to me.  
His new-born tameness naught avail'd—  
My limbs were bound; my force had fail'd,  
Perchance, had they been free.  
With feeble effort still I tried  
To rend the bonds so starkly tied—  
But still it was in vain;  
My limbs were only wrung the more,  
And soon the idle strife gave o'er,  
Which but prolong'd their pain:  
The dizzy race seem'd almost done,  
Although no goal was nearly won:  
Some streaks announced the coming sun—  
How slow, alas! he came!  
Methought that mist of dawning gray  
Would never dapple into day;  
How heavily it roll'd away—  
Before the eastern flame  
Rose crimson, and deposed the stars,  
And call'd the radiance from their cars,  
And fill'd the earth, from his deep throne,  
With lonely lustre, all his own.

Up rose the sun; the mists were curl'd  
Back from the solitary world  
Which lay around—behind—before;  
What boot'd it to traverse o'er  
Plain, forest, river? Man nor brute,  
Nor dint of hoof, nor print of foot,  
Lay in the wild luxuriant soil;  
No sign of travel—none of toil;  
The very air was mute;  
And not an insect's shrill small horn,  
Nor matin bird's new voice was borne  
From herb nor thicket. Many a werst,  
Panting as if his heart would burst,  
The weary brute still stagger'd on;  
And still we were—or seem'd—alone:  
At length, while reeling on our way,  
Methought I heard a courser neigh,



From out yon tuft of blackening firs.  
Is it the wind those branches stirs ?  
No, no! from out the forest prance  
A trampling troop; I see them come !  
In one vast squadron they advance !

I strove to cry—my lips were dumb.  
The steeds rush on in plunging pride;  
But where are they the reins to guide ?  
A thousand horse—and none to ride !  
With flowing tail, and flying mane,  
Wide nostrils—never stretch'd by pain,  
Mouths bloodless to the bit or rein,  
And feet that iron never shod,  
And flanks unscarr'd by spur or rod,  
A thousand horse, the wild, the free,  
Like waves that follow o'er the sea,

Came thickly thundering on,  
As if our faint approach to meet ;  
The sight renerv'd my courser's feet,  
A moment staggering, feebly fleet,  
A moment, with a faint low neigh,  
He answer'd, and then fell;  
With gasps and glazing eyes he lay,  
And reeking limbs immovable,

His first and last career is done!  
On came the troop—they saw him stoop,  
They saw me strangely bound along  
His back with many a bloody thong:  
They stop—they start—they snuff the air,  
Gallop a moment here and there,  
Approach, retire, wheel round and round,  
Then plunging back with sudden bound,  
Headed by one black mighty steed,  
Who seem'd the patriarch of his breed,

Without a single speck or hair  
Of white upon his shaggy hide;  
They snort—they foam—neigh—swerve aside,  
And backward to the forest fly,  
By instinct, from a human eye.—

They left me there to my despair,

Link'd to the dead and stiffening wretch,  
 Whose lifeless limbs beneath me stretch,  
 Relieved from that unwonted weight,  
 From whence I could not extricate  
 Nor him nor me—and there we lay  
     The dying on the dead !  
 I little deem'd another day  
     Would see my houseless, helpless head.

And there from morn till twilight bound  
 I felt the heavy hours toil round,  
 With just enough of light to see  
 My last of suns go down on me.

\*        \*        \*        \*        \*        \*

The sun was sinking—still I lay  
     Chain'd to the chill and stiffening steed,  
 I thought to mingle there our clay;  
     And my dim eyes of death hath need,  
     No hope arose of being freed :  
 I cast my last looks up the sky,  
     And there between me and the sun  
 I saw the expecting raven fly,  
 Who scarce would wait till both should die,  
     Ere his repast begun ;  
 He flew, and perch'd, then flew once more,  
 And each time nearer than before ;  
 I saw his wing through twilight flit,  
 And once so near me he alit  
     I could have smote, but lack'd the strength ;  
 But the slight motion of my hand,  
 And feeble scratching of the sand,  
 The exerted throat's faint struggling noise,  
 Which scarcely could be call'd a voice,  
     Together scared him off at length.—  
 I know no more—my latest dream  
     Is something of a lovely star  
     Which fix'd my dull eyes from afar,  
 And went and came with wandering beam,

And of the cold, dull, swimming, dense  
 Sensation of recurring sense,  
 And then subsiding back to death,  
 And then again a little breath,  
 A little thrill, a short suspense,  
 An icy sickness curdling o'er  
 My heart, and sparks that cross'd my brain—  
 A gasp, a throb, a start of pain,  
 A sigh, and nothing more.

### WORDSWORTH.

MENTION has been made of Wordsworth's famous poem, *On Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood*, and an extract from the ode was given on page 203. The closing stanzas are quoted here. They carry on the beautiful but unsubstantial thought of the poem, that

“Heaven lies about us in our infancy!”

O joy! that in our embers  
 Is something that doth live,  
 That nature yet remembers  
 What was so fugitive!

The thought of our past years in me doth breed  
 Perpetual benediction: not indeed  
 For that which is most worthy to be blest;  
 Delight and liberty, the simple creed  
 Of childhood, whether busy or at rest,  
 With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:—

Not for these I raise

The song of thanks and praise;  
 But for those obstinate questionings  
 Of sense and outward things,  
 Fallings from us, vanishings;  
 Blank misgivings of a Creature

Moving about in worlds not realised,  
 High instincts before which our mortal Nature  
 Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised:

But for those first affections,  
 Those shadowy recollections,  
 Which, be they what they may,  
 Are yet the fountain light of all our day,  
 Are yet a master light of all our seeing;  
 Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make  
 Our noisy years seem moments in the being  
 Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,  
 To perish never;  
 Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,  
 Nor Man nor Boy,  
 Nor all that is at enmity with joy,  
 Can utterly abolish or destroy!  
 Hence, in a season of calm weather,  
 Though inland far we be,  
 Our souls have sight of that immortal sea  
 Which brought us hither,  
 Can in a moment travel thither,  
 And see the children sport upon the shore,  
 And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Then sing ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!  
 And let the young Lambs bound  
 As to the tabor's sound!  
 We in thought will join your throng,  
 Ye that pipe and ye that play,  
 Ye that through your hearts to-day  
 Feel the gladness of the May!  
 What though the radiance which was once so bright  
 Be now for ever taken from my sight,  
 Though nothing can bring back the hour  
 Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;  
 We will grieve not, rather find  
 Strength in what remains behind;  
 In the primal sympathy  
 Which having been must ever be,  
 In the soothing thoughts that spring  
 Out of human suffering,  
 In the faith that looks through death,  
 In years that bring the philosophic mind.

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,  
Think not of any severing of our loves!  
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;  
I only have relinquished one delight  
To live beneath your more habitual sway.  
I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,  
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they;  
The innocent brightness of a new-born Day  
Is lovely yet;  
The Clouds that gather round the setting sun  
Do take a sober colouring from an eye  
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;  
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.  
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,  
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,  
To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

The following selections from Wordsworth's long poems, *The Excursion* and *The Prelude*, will reveal the source of his own best inspiration, and will also show the peculiar inspiration that he communicates to his readers. It is fair to say that such chosen passages do not convey a just impression of these two poems as a whole. *The Excursion* and *The Prelude* contain sublime poetry, but they also contain pages that are weary and unprofitable reading. The lover of Wordsworth must frankly accept the inequalities of his poetry.

Such was the Boy,—but for the growing Youth  
What soul was his, when, from the naked top  
Of some bold headland, he beheld the sun  
Rise up, and bathe the world in light! He looked:  
Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth  
And ocean's liquid mass, in gladness lay  
Beneath him; far and wide the clouds were touched,  
And in their silent faces could he read  
Unutterable love. Sound needed none,  
Nor any voice of joy; his spirit drank



The spectacle: sensation, soul, and form,  
All melted into him; they swallowed up  
His animal being; in them did he live,  
And by them did he live; they were his life.  
In such access of mind, in such high hour  
Of visitation from the living God,  
Thought was not; in enjoyment it expired.  
No thanks he breathed, he proffered no request;  
Rapt into still communion that transcends  
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,  
His mind was a thanksgiving to the Power  
That made him; it was blessedness and love!

A Herdsman on the lonely mountain-tops,  
Such intercourse was his, and in this sort  
Was his existence oftentimes *possessed*.  
O then how beautiful, how bright, appeared  
The written promise! Early had he learned  
To reverence the volume that displays  
The mystery, the life which cannot die;  
But in the mountains did he *feel* his faith.  
All things, responsive to the writing, there  
Breathed immortality, revolving life,  
And greatness still revolving; infinite:  
There littleness was not; the least of things  
Seemed infinite; and there his spirit shaped  
Her prospects, nor did he believe,—he *saw*.  
What wonder if his being thus became  
Sublime and comprehensive! Low desires,  
Low thoughts, had there no place; yet was his heart  
Lowly; for he was meek in gratitude,  
Oft as he called those ecstasies to mind,  
And whence they flowed; and from them he acquired  
Wisdom, which works through patience; thence he learned  
In oft-recurring hours of sober thought  
To look on Nature with a humble heart,  
Self-questioned where it did not understand,  
And with a superstitious eye of love.

And thus before his eighteenth year was told,  
Accumulated feelings pressed his heart

With still increasing weight; he was o'erpowered  
By Nature; by the turbulence subdued  
Of his own mind; by mystery and hope,  
And the first virgin passion of a soul  
Communing with the glorious universe.  
Full often wished he that the winds might rage  
When they were silent: far more fondly now  
Than in his earlier season did he love  
Tempestuous nights,—the conflict and the sounds  
That live in darkness. From his intellect  
And from the stillness of abstracted thought  
He asked repose; and, failing oft to win  
The peace required, he scanned the laws of light  
Amid the roar of torrents, where they send  
From hollow clefts up to the clearer air  
A cloud of mist, that, smitten by the sun,  
Varies its rainbow hues. But vainly thus,  
And vainly by all other means, he strove  
To mitigate the fever of his heart.

In dreams, in study, and in ardent thought,  
Thus was he reared; much wanting to assist  
The growth of intellect, yet gaining more,  
And every moral feeling of his soul  
Strengthened and braced, by breathing in content  
The keen, the wholesome air of poverty,  
And drinking from the well of homely life.

*The Excursion, Book I.*

But ere nightfall,  
When in our pinnace we returned at leisure  
Over the shadowy lake, and to the beach  
Of some small island steered our course with one,  
The Minstrel of the Troop, and left him there,  
And rowed off gently, while he blew his flute  
Alone upon the rock,—O then the calm  
And dead still water lay upon my mind  
Even with a weight of pleasure, and the sky,  
Never before so beautiful, sank down  
Into my heart, and held me like a dream!  
Thus were my sympathies enlarged, and thus

Daily the common range of visible things  
Grew dear to me: already I began  
To love the sun; a boy I loved the sun,  
Not as I since have loved him, as a pledge  
And surety of our earthly life, a light  
Which we behold and feel we are alive,  
Nor for his bounty to so many worlds,—  
But for this cause, that I had seen him lay  
His beauty on the morning hills, had seen  
The western mountain touch his setting orb,  
In many a thoughtless hour, when, from excess  
Of happiness, my blood appeared to flow  
For its own pleasure, and I breathed with joy.  
And, from like feelings, humble though intense,  
To patriotic and domestic love  
Analogous, the moon to me was dear;  
For I could dream away my purposes,  
Standing to gaze upon her while she hung  
Midway between the hills, as if she knew  
No other region, but belonged to thee,  
Yea, appertained by a peculiar right  
To thee and thy gray huts, thou one dear Vale!

For I would walk alone,  
Under the quiet stars, and at that time  
Have felt whate'er there is of power in sound  
To breathe an elevated mood, by form  
Or image unprofaned; and I would stand,  
If the night blackened with a coming storm,  
Beneath some rock, listening to notes that are  
The ghostly language of the ancient earth,  
Or make their dim abode in distant winds.  
Thence did I drink the visionary power;  
And deem not profitless those fleeting moods  
Of shadowy exultation: not for this,  
That they are kindred to our purer mind  
And intellectual life; but that the soul,  
Remembering how she felt, but what she felt  
Remembering not, retains an obscure sense  
Of possible sublimity, whereto  
With growing faculties she doth aspire,

With faculties still growing, feeling still  
That, whatsoever point they gain, they yet  
Have something to pursue.

*The Prelude, Book I.*

We add some fragmentary verses which are characteristic and memorable.

Oft did he take delight  
To measure the altitude of some tall crag  
That is the eagle's birthplace, or some peak  
Familiar with forgotten years, that shows  
Inscribed upon its visionary sides  
The history of many a winter storm,  
Or obscure records of the path of fire.

*The Excursion, Book I.*

We live by Admiration, Hope, and Love;  
And, even as these are well and wisely fixed,  
In dignity of being we ascend.

*The Excursion, Book IV.*

If, in this time  
Of dereliction and dismay, I yet  
Despair not of our nature, but retain  
A more than Roman confidence, a faith  
That fails not, in all sorrow my support,  
The blessing of my life,—the gift is yours,  
Ye winds and sounding cataracts! 't is yours,  
Ye mountains! thine, O Nature! Thou hast fed  
My lofty speculations; and in thee,  
For this uneasy heart of ours, I find  
A never-failing principle of joy  
And purest passion.

*The Prelude, Book II.*

She lived unknown, and few could know  
When Lucy ceased to be;  
But she is in her grave, and, oh,  
The difference to me!

*"She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways."*

"The Stars of midnight shall be dear  
 To her; and she shall lean her ear  
 In many a secret place  
 Where Rivulets dance their wayward round,  
 And beauty born of murmuring sound  
 Shall pass into her face."

*"Three Years She Grew."*

The Child is Father of the Man;  
 And I could wish my days to be  
 Bound each to each by natural piety.

*"My Heart Leaps Up."*

The moving accident is not my trade:  
 To freeze the blood I have no ready arts:  
 'Tis my delight, alone in summer shade,  
 To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts.

*Hart-Leap Well, Part Second.*

And what, for this frail world, were all  
 That mortals do or suffer,  
 Did no responsive harp, no pen,  
 Memorial tribute offer?  
 Yea, what were mighty Nature's self?  
 Her features, could they win us,  
 Unhelped by the poetic voice  
 That hourly speaks within us?

*Yarrow Revisited.*

Blessings be with them—and eternal praise,  
 Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares—  
 The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs  
 Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays!  
 Oh! might my name be numbered among theirs,  
 Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

*Sonnet on Personal Talk.*



**MACAULAY.**

THE following selection from Macaulay shows his strong, clear, and brilliant style. His view of Boswell is the old view; but just readers have come to see the impossibility of Macaulay's glittering paradox, "If he had not been a great fool, he would never have been a great writer."

The Life of Johnson is assuredly a great, a very great work. Homer is not more decidedly the first of heroic poets, Shakespeare is not more decidedly the first of dramatists, Demosthenes is not more decidedly the first of orators, than Boswell is the first of biographers. He has no second. He has distanced all his competitors so decidedly that it is not worth while to place them. Eclipse is first, and the rest nowhere.

We are not sure that there is in the whole history of the human intellect so strange a phenomenon as this book. Many of the greatest men that ever lived have written biography. Boswell was one of the smallest men that ever lived, and he has beaten them all. He was, if we are to give any credit to his own account or to the united testimony of all who knew him, a man of the meanest and feeblest intellect. Johnson described him as a fellow who had missed his only chance of immortality by not having been alive when the Dunciad was written. Beauclerk used his name as a proverbial expression for a bore. He was the laughing-stock of the whole of that brilliant society which has owed to him the greater part of its fame. He was always laying himself at the feet of some eminent man, and begging to be spit upon and trampled upon. He was always earning some ridiculous nickname, and then "binding it as a crown unto him," not merely in metaphor, but literally.

That such a man should have written one of the best books in the world is strange enough. But this is not all. Many persons who have conducted themselves foolishly in active life, and whose conversation has indicated no superior powers of mind, have left us valuable works. Goldsmith was very justly de-

scribed by one of his contemporaries as an inspired idiot, and by another as a being

“Who wrote like an angel, and talked like poor Poll.”

La Fontaine was in society a mere simpleton. His blunders would not come in amiss among the stories of Hierocles. But these men attained literary eminence in spite of their weaknesses. Boswell attained it by reason of his weaknesses. If he had not been a great fool, he would never have been a great writer. Without all the qualities which made him the jest and the torment of those among whom he lived, without the officiousness, the inquisitiveness, the effrontery, the toad-eating, the insensibility to all reproof, he never could have produced so excellent a book.

Those parts of his book which, considered abstractedly, are most utterly worthless, are delightful when we read them as illustrations of the character of the writer. Bad in themselves, they are good dramatically, like the nonsense of Justice Shallow, the clipped English of Dr. Caius, or the misplaced consonants of Fluellen. Of all confessors, Boswell is the most candid. Other men who have pretended to lay open their own hearts, Rousseau, for example, and Lord Byron, have evidently written with a constant view to effect, and are to be then most distrusted when they seem to be most sincere. There is scarcely any man who would not rather accuse himself of great crimes and of dark and tempestuous passions than proclaim all his little vanities and wild fancies. It would be easier to find a person who would avow actions like those of Cæsar Borgia or Danton, than one who would publish a daydream like those of Alnaschar and Malvolio. Those weaknesses which most men keep covered up in the most secret places of the mind, not to be disclosed to the eye of friendship or of love, were precisely the weaknesses which Boswell paraded before all the world. He was perfectly frank, because the weakness of his understanding and the tumult of his spirits prevented him from knowing when he made himself ridiculous. His book resembles nothing so much as the conversation of the inmates of the Palace of Truth.

His fame is great; and it will, we have no doubt, be lasting;

but it is fame of a peculiar kind, and indeed marvellously resembles infamy. We remember no other case in which the world has made so great a distinction between a book and its author. In general, the book and the author are considered as one. To admire the book is to admire the author. The case of Boswell is an exception, we think the only exception, to this rule. His work is universally allowed to be interesting, instructive, eminently original; yet it has brought him nothing but contempt. All the world reads it; all the world delights in it: yet we do not remember ever to have read or ever to have heard any expression of respect and admiration for the man to whom we owe so much instruction and amusement.

*Essay on Croker's edition of Boswell's Life of Johnson.*

The following selection is from Macaulay's Essay on Byron:

It was in description and meditation that Byron excelled. "Description," as he said in Don Juan, "was his forte." His manner is indeed peculiar, and is almost unequalled; rapid, sketchy, full of vigour; the selection happy; the strokes few and bold. In spite of the reverence which we feel for the genius of Mr. Wordsworth, we cannot but think that the minuteness of his descriptions often diminishes their effect. He has accustomed himself to gaze on nature with the eye of a lover, to dwell on every feature, and to mark every change of aspect. Those beauties which strike the most negligent observer, and those which only a close attention discovers, are equally familiar to him and are equally prominent in his poetry. The proverb of old Hesiod, that half is often more than the whole, is eminently applicable to description. The policy of the Dutch who cut down most of the precious trees in the Spice Islands, in order to raise the value of what remained, was a policy which poets would do well to imitate. It was a policy which no poet understood better than Lord Byron. Whatever his faults might be, he was never, while his mind retained its vigour, accused of prolixity.

His descriptions, great as was their intrinsic merit, derived their principal interest from the feeling which always mingled with them. He was himself the beginning, the middle, and the

end, of all his own poetry, the hero of every tale, the chief object in every landscape. Harold, Lara, Manfred, and a crowd of other characters, were universally considered merely as loose incognitos of Byron; and there is every reason to believe that he meant them to be so considered. The wonders of the outer world, the Tagus, with the mighty fleets of England riding on its bosom, the towers of Cintra overhanging the shaggy forest of cork-trees and willows, the glaring marble of Pentelicus, the banks of the Rhine, the glaciers of Clarens, the sweet Lake of Lemán, the dell of Egeria with its summer-birds and rustling lizards, the shapeless ruins of Rome overgrown with ivy and wall-flowers, the stars, the sea, the mountains, all were mere accessories, the background to one dark and melancholy figure.

Never had any writer so vast a command of the whole eloquence of scorn, misanthropy and despair. That Marah was never dry. No art could sweeten, no draughts could exhaust, its perennial waters of bitterness. Never was there such variety in monotony as that of Byron. From maniac laughter to piercing lamentation, there was not a single note of human anguish of which he was not master. Year after year, and month after month, he continued to repeat that to be wretched is the destiny of all; that to be eminently wretched is the destiny of the eminent; that all the desires by which we are cursed lead alike to misery : if they are not gratified, to the misery of disappointment; if they are gratified, to the misery of satiety. His heroes are men who have arrived by different roads at the same goal of despair, who are sick of life, who are at war with society, who are supported in their anguish only by an unconquerable pride resembling that of Prometheus on the rock or of Satan in the burning marl, who can master their agonies by the force of their will, and who, to the last, defy the whole power of earth and heaven. He always described himself as a *man* of the same kind with his favourite creations, as a man whose heart had been withered, whose capacity for happiness was gone and could not be restored, but whose invincible spirit dared the worst that could befall him here or hereafter.

How much of this morbid feeling sprang from an original disease of the mind, how much from real misfortune, how much from the nervousness of dissipation, how much was fanciful,

how much was merely affected, it is impossible for us, and would probably have been impossible for the most intimate friends of Lord Byron, to decide. Whether there ever existed, or can ever exist, a person answering to the description which he gave of himself may be doubted; but that he was not such a person is beyond all doubt. It is ridiculous to imagine that a man whose mind was really imbued with scorn of his fellow-creatures would have published three or four books every year in order to tell them so; or that a man who could say with truth that he neither sought sympathy nor needed it would have admitted all Europe to hear his farewell to his wife, and his blessings on his child. In the second canto of *Childe Harold*, he tells us that he is insensible to fame and obloquy:

"Ill may such contest now the spirit move,  
Which heeds nor keen reproof nor partial praise."

Yet we know on the best evidence that, a day or two before he published these lines, he was greatly, indeed childishly, elated by the compliments paid to his maiden speech in the House of Lords.

We are far, however, from thinking that his sadness was altogether feigned. He was naturally a man of great sensibility; he had been ill educated; his feelings had been early exposed to sharp trials; he had been crossed in his boyish love; he had been mortified by the failure of his first literary efforts; he was straitened in pecuniary circumstances; he was unfortunate in his domestic relations; the public treated him with cruel injustice; his health and spirits suffered from his dissipated habits of life; he was, on the whole, an unhappy man. He early discovered that, by parading his unhappiness before the multitude, he produced an immense sensation. The world gave him every encouragement to talk about his mental sufferings. The interest which his first confessions excited induced him to affect much that he did not feel; and the affectation probably reacted on his feelings. How far the character in which he exhibited himself was genuine, and how far theatrical, it would probably have puzzled himself to say.

There can be no doubt that this remarkable man owed the vast influence which he exercised over his contemporaries at least as much to his gloomy egotism as to the real power of his poetry. We never could very clearly understand how it is that egotism,



so unpopular in conversation, should be so popular in writing; or how it is that men who affect in their compositions qualities and feelings which they have not, impose so much more easily on their contemporaries than on posterity. The interest which the loves of Petrarch excited in his own time, and the pitying fondness with which half Europe looked upon Rousseau, are well known. To readers of our age, the love of Petrarch seems to have been love of that kind which breaks no hearts, and the sufferings of Rousseau to have deserved laughter rather than pity, to have been partly counterfeited, and partly the consequences of his own perverseness and vanity.

What our grandchildren may think of the character of Lord Byron, as exhibited in his poetry, we will not pretend to guess. It is certain, that the interest which he excited during his life is without a parallel in literary history. The feeling with which young readers of poetry regarded him can be conceived only by those who have experienced it. To people who are unacquainted with real calamity, "nothing is so dainty sweet as lovely melancholy." This faint image of sorrow has in all ages been considered by young gentlemen as an agreeable excitement. Old gentlemen and middle-aged gentlemen have so many real causes of sadness that they are rarely inclined "to be as sad as night only for wantonness." Indeed they want the power almost as much as the inclination. We know very few persons engaged in active life who, even if they were to procure stools to be melancholy upon, and were to sit down with all the premeditation of Master Stephen, would be able to enjoy much of what somebody calls the "ecstasy of woe."

Among that large class of young persons whose reading is almost entirely confined to works of imagination, the popularity of Lord Byron was unbounded. They bought pictures of him; they treasured up the smallest relics of him; they learned his poems by heart, and did their best to write like him, and to look like him. Many of them practised at the glass in the hope of catching the curl of the upper lip, and the scowl of the brow, which appear in some of his portraits. A few discarded their neckcloths in imitation of their great leader. For some years the Minerva press sent forth no novel without a mysterious, unhappy, Lara-like peer. The number of hopeful under-graduates and

medical students who became things of dark imaginings, on whom the freshness of the heart ceased to fall like dew, whose passions had consumed themselves to dust, and to whom the relief of tears was denied, passes all calculation. This was not the worst. There was created in the minds of many of these enthusiasts a pernicious and absurd association between intellectual power and moral depravity. From the poetry of Lord Byron they drew a system of ethics, compounded of misanthropy and voluptuousness, a system in which the two great commandments were, to hate your neighbour, and to love your neighbour's wife.

This affectation has passed away; and a few more years will destroy whatever yet remains of that magical potency which once belonged to the name of Byron. To us he is still a man, young, noble, and unhappy. To our children he will be merely a writer; and their impartial judgment will appoint his place among writers, without regard to his rank or to his private history. That his poetry will undergo a severe sifting, that much of what has been admired by his contemporaries will be rejected as worthless, we have little doubt. But we have as little doubt, that, after the closest scrutiny, there will still remain much that can only perish with the English language.

## DICKENS.

THE essential elements of a novel are the conduct of the story and the development of character, neither of which can be shown in brief selections. The extract from Dickens which is here given will, however, serve to illustrate his humor, and will indicate his mode of treating character. It is a part of the chapter called *Podsnappery*, in *Our Mutual Friend*. The passage as it appears in this book is slightly abridged.

Mr. Podsnap was well to do, and stood very high in Mr. Podsnap's opinion. Beginning with a good inheritance, he had married a good inheritance, and had thriven exceedingly in the Marine Insurance way, and was quite satisfied. He never could make

out why everybody was not quite satisfied, and he felt conscious that he set a brilliant social example in being particularly well satisfied with most things, and, above all other things, with himself.

Thus happily acquainted with his own merit and importance, Mr. Podsnap settled that whatever he put behind him he put out of existence. There was a dignified conclusiveness—not to add a grand convenience—in this way of getting rid of disagreeables, which had done much towards establishing Mr. Podsnap in his lofty place in Mr. Podsnap's satisfaction. "I don't want to know about it; I don't choose to discuss it; I don't admit it!" Mr. Podsnap had even acquired a peculiar flourish of his right arm in often clearing the world of its most difficult problems, by sweeping them behind him (and consequently sheer away) with those words and a flushed face. For they affronted him.

Mr. Podsnap's world was not a very large world, morally; no, not even geographically: seeing that although his business was sustained upon commerce with other countries, he considered other countries, with that important reservation, a mistake, and of their manners and customs would conclusively observe, "Not English!" when, PRESTO! with a flourish of the arm, and a flush of the face, they were swept away.

These may be said to have been the articles of a faith and school which the present chapter takes the liberty of calling, after its representative man, Podsnappery. They were confined within close bounds, as Mr. Podsnap's own head was confined by his shirt collar; and they were enunciated with a sounding pomp that smacked of the creaking of Mr. Podsnap's own boots.

There was a Miss Podsnap. And this young rocking-horse was being trained in her mother's art of prancing in a stately manner without ever getting on. But the high parental action was not yet imparted to her, and in truth she was but an under-sized damsel, with high shoulders, low spirits, chilled elbows, and a rasped surface of nose, who seemed to take occasional frosty peeps out of childhood into womanhood, and to shrink back again, overcome by her mother's head-dress and her father from head to foot—crushed by the mere dead-weight of Podsnappery. A certain institution in Mr. Podsnap's mind which he called "the young person" may be considered to have been embodied in Miss Podsnap, his daughter.

The Podsnaps lived in a shady angle adjoining Portman Square. They were a kind of people certain to dwell in the shade, wherever they dwelt. Miss Podsnap's life had been, from her first appearance on this planet, altogether of a shady order; for, Mr. Podsnap's young person was likely to get little good out of association with other young persons, and had therefore been restricted to companionship with not very congenial older persons, and with massive furniture. Miss Podsnap's early views of life being principally derived from the reflections of it in her father's boots, and in the walnut and rosewood tables of the dim drawing-rooms, and in their swarthy giants of looking-glasses, were of a sombre cast; and it was not wonderful that now, when she was on most days solemnly tooled through the Park by the side of her mother in a great tall custard-coloured phaeton, she showed above the apron of that vehicle like a dejected young person sitting up in bed to take a startled look at things in general, and very strongly desiring to get her head under the counterpane again.

Said Mr. Podsnap to Mrs. Podsnap, "Georgiana is almost eighteen."

Said Mrs. Podsnap to Mr. Podsnap, assenting, "Almost eighteen."

Said Mr. Podsnap then to Mrs. Podsnap, "Really I think we should have some people on Georgiana's birthday."

Said Mrs. Podsnap then to Mr. Podsnap, "Which will enable us to clear off all those people who are due."

So it came to pass that Mr. and Mrs. Podsnap requested the honour of the company of seventeen friends of their souls at dinner, and that they substituted other friends of their souls for such of the seventeen original friends of their souls as deeply regretted that a prior engagement prevented their having the honour of dining with Mr. and Mrs. Podsnap, in pursuance of their kind invitation; and that Mrs. Podsnap said of all these inconsolable personages, as she checked them off with a pencil in her list, "Asked, at any rate, and got rid of;" and that they successfully disposed of a good many friends of their souls in this way, and felt their consciences much lightened.

Mr. and Mrs. Veneering, and Mr. and Mrs. Veneering's bran-new bride and bridegroom, were of the dinner company; but the Podsnap establishment had nothing else in common with the

Veneerings. Mr. Podsnap could tolerate taste in a mushroom man who stood in need of that sort of thing, but was far above it himself. Hideous solidity was the characteristic of the Podsnap plate. Everything was made to look as heavy as it could, and to take up as much room as possible. Everything said boastfully, "Here you have as much of me in my ugliness as if I were only lead; but I am so many ounces of precious metal worth so much an ounce;—wouldn't you like to melt me down?" A corpulent straddling epergne, blotched all over it as if it had broken out in an eruption rather than been ornamented, delivered this address from an unsightly silver platform in the centre of the table. Four silver wine-coolers, each furnished with four staring heads, each head obtrusively carrying a big silver ring in each of its ears, conveyed the sentiment up and down the table, and handed it on to the pot-bellied silver salt-cellars. All the big silver spoons and forks widened the mouths of the company expressly for the purpose of thrusting the sentiment down their throats with every morsel they ate.

The majority of the guests were like the plate, and included several heavy articles weighing ever so much. But there was a foreign gentleman among them: whom Mr. Podsnap had invited after much debate with himself—believing the whole European continent to be in mortal alliance against the young person—and there was a droll disposition, not only on the part of Mr. Podsnap, but of everybody else, to treat him as if he were a child who was hard of hearing.

As a delicate concession to this unfortunately-born foreigner, Mr. Podsnap, in receiving him, had presented his wife as "Madame Podsnap;" also his daughter as "Mademoiselle Podsnap," with some inclination to add "ma fille," in which bold venture, however, he checked himself.

"How Do You Like London?" Mr. Podsnap now inquired from his station of host, as if he were administering something in the nature of a powder or potion to the deaf child; "London, Londres, London?"

The foreign gentleman admired it.

"You find it Very Large?" said Mr. Podsnap, spaciouly.

The foreign gentleman found it very large.

"And Very Rich?"



The foreign gentleman found it, without doubt, énormément riche.

"Enormously Rich, We Say," returned Mr. Podsnap, in a condescending manner. "Our English adverbs do Not terminate in Mong, and We Pronounce the 'ch' as if there were a 't' before it. We Say Ritch."

"Reetch," remarked the foreign gentleman.

"And Do You Find, Sir," pursued Mr. Podsnap, with dignity, "Many Evidences that Strike You, of our British Constitution in the Streets Of The World's Metropolis, London, Londres, London?"

The foreign gentleman begged to be pardoned, but did not altogether understand.

"The Constitution Britannique," Mr. Podsnap explained, as if he were teaching in an infant school. "We Say British, But You Say Britannique, You Know," (forgivingly, as if that were not his fault). "The Constitution, Sir."

The foreign gentleman said, "Mais, yees ; I know eem."

A youngish sallowish gentleman in spectacles, with a lumpy forehead, seated in a supplementary chair at a corner of the table, here caused a profound sensation by saying, in a raised voice, "ESKER," and then stopping dead.

"Mais oui," said the foreign gentleman, turning towards him. "Est-ce que ? Quoi done ?"

But the gentleman with the lumpy forehead having for the time delivered himself of all that he found behind his lumps, spake for the time no more.

"I Was Inquiring," said Mr. Podsnap, resuming the thread of his discourse, "Whether You Have Observed in our Streets as We should say, Upon our Pavvy as You would say, any Tokens—"

The foreign gentleman, with patient courtesy entreated pardon ; "But what was tokenz?"

"Marks," said Mr. Podsnap ; "Signs, you know, Appearances—Traces."

"Ah ! of a Orse ?" inquired the foreign gentleman.

"We call it Horse," said Mr. Podsnap, with forbearance. "In England, Angleterre, England, We Aspirate the 'H,' and We Say 'Horse.' Only our Lower Classes Say 'Orse !'"

"Pardon," said the foreign gentleman; "I am alwiz wrong!"

"Our Language," said Mr. Podsnap, with a gracious consciousness of being always right, "is Difficult. Ours is a Copious Language, and Trying to Strangers. I will not Pursue my Question."

But the lumpy gentleman, unwilling to give it up, again madly said, "ESKER," and again spake no more.

"It merely referred," Mr. Podsnap explained, with a sense of meritorious proprietorship, "to Our Constitution, Sir. We Englishmen are Very Proud of our Constitution, Sir. It Was Bestowed Upon Us By Providence. No Other Country is so Favoured as This Country."

"And ozer countries?"—the foreign gentleman was beginning, when Mr. Podsnap put him right again.

"We do not say Ozer; we say Other: the letters are 'T' and 'H;' You say Tay and Aish, You Know; (still with clemency). The sound is 'th'—'th!'"

"And *other* countries," said the foreign gentleman. "They do how?"

"They do, Sir," returned Mr. Podsnap, gravely shaking his head; "they do—I am sorry to be obliged to say it—as they do."

"It was a little particular of Providence," said the foreign gentleman, laughing; "for the frontier is not large."

"Undoubtedly," assented Mr. Podsnap; "But So it is. It was the Charter of the Land. This Island was Blest, Sir, to the Direct Exclusion of such Other Countries as—as there may happen to be. And if we were all Englishmen present, I would say," added Mr. Podsnap, looking round upon his compatriots, and sounding solemnly with his theme, "that there is in the Englishman a combination of qualities, a modesty, an independence, a responsibility, a repose, combined with an absence of everything calculated to call a blush into the cheek of a young person, which one would seek in vain among the Nations of the Earth."

Having delivered this little summary, Mr. Podsnap's face flushed as he thought of the remote possibility of its being at all qualified by any prejudiced citizen of any other country; and,

with his favourite right-arm flourish, he put the rest of Europe and the whole of Asia, Africa, and America nowhere.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mrs. Lammle was overjoyed to escape into a corner for a little quiet talk.

It promised to be a very quiet talk, for Miss Podsnap replied in a flutter, "Oh! Indeed, it's very kind of you, but I am afraid I *don't* talk."

"Let us make a beginning," said the insinuating Mrs. Lammle, with her best smile.

"Oh! I'm afraid you'll find me very dull. But Ma talks!"

That was plainly to be seen, for Ma was talking then at her usual canter, with arched head and mane, opened eyes and nostrils.

"Fond of reading perhaps?"

"Yes. At least I—don't mind that so much," returned Miss Podsnap.

"M—m—m—music." So insinuating was Mrs. Lammle that she got half a dozen ms into the word before she got it out.

"I haven't nerve to play even if I could. Ma plays."

(At exactly the same canter, and with a certain flourishing appearance of doing something, Ma did, in fact, occasionally take a rock upon the instrument.)

"Of course you like dancing?"

"Oh no, I don't," said Miss Podsnap.

"No? With your youth and attractions? Truly, my dear, you surprise me!"

"I can't say," observed Miss Podsnap, after hesitating considerably, and stealing several timid looks at Mrs. Lammle's carefully arranged face, "how I might have liked it if I had been a—you won't mention it, *will* you?"

"My dear! Never!"

"No, I am sure you won't. I can't say then how I should have liked it, if I had been a chimney-sweep on May-day."

"Gracious!" was the exclamation which amazement elicited from Mrs. Lammle.

"There! I knew you'd wonder. But you won't mention it, will you?"

"Upon my word, my love," said Mrs. Lammle, "you make me

ten times more desirous, now I talk to you, to know you well than I was when I sat over yonder looking at you. How I wish we could be real friends! Try me as a real friend. Come! Don't fancy me a frumpy old married woman, my dear; I was married but the other day, you know; I am dressed as a bride now, you see. About the chimney-sweeps?"

"Hush! Ma'll hear."

"She can't hear from where she sits."

"Don't you be too sure of that," said Miss Podsnap, in a lower voice. "Well, what I mean is, that they seem to enjoy it."

"And that perhaps you would have enjoyed it, if you had been one of them?"

Miss Podsnap nodded significantly.

"Then you don't enjoy it now?"

"How is it possible?" said Miss Podsnap. "Oh it is such a dreadful thing! If I was wicked enough—and strong enough—to kill anybody, it should be my partner."

This was such an entirely new view of the Terpsichorean art as socially practised, that Mrs. Lammle looked at her young friend in some astonishment.

"It sounds horrid, don't it?" said Miss Podsnap, with a penitential face.

Mrs. Lammle, not knowing very well what to answer, resolved herself into a look of smiling encouragement.

"But it is, and it always has been," pursued Miss Podsnap, "such a trial to me! I so dread being awful. And it is so awful! No one knows what I suffered at Madame Sauteuse's, where I learnt to dance and make presentation-curtseys, and other dreadful things—or at least where they tried to teach me. Ma can do it."

"At any rate, my love," said Mrs. Lammle, soothingly, "that's over."

"Yes, it's over," returned Miss Podsnap, "but there's nothing gained by that. It's worse here than at Madame Sauteuse's. Ma was there, and Ma's here; but Pa wasn't there, and company wasn't there, and there were not real partners there. Oh there's Ma speaking to the man at the piano! Oh there's Ma going up to somebody! Oh I know she's going to bring him to me! Oh please don't, please don't, please don't! Oh keep away, keep

away, keep away!" These pious ejaculations Miss Podsnap uttered with her eyes closed, and her head leaning back against the wall.

But the Ogre advanced under the pilotage of Ma, and Ma said, "Georgiana, Mr. Grompus," and the Ogre clutched his victim and bore her off to his castle in the top couple.

And now, the grand chain riveted to the last link, the discreet automaton ceased, and the sixteen, two and two, took a walk among the furniture. And herein the unconsciousness of the Ogre Grompus was pleasantly conspicuous; for that complacent monster, believing that he was giving Miss Podsnap a treat, prolonged to the utmost stretch of possibility a peripatetic account of an archery meeting; while his victim, heading the procession of sixteen as it slowly circled about, like a revolving funeral, never raised her eyes except once to steal a glance at Mrs. Lammle, expressive of intense despair.

At length the procession was dissolved by the violent arrival of a nutmeg, before which the drawing-room door bounced open as if it were a cannon-ball; and while that fragrant article, dispersed through several glasses of coloured warm water, was going the round of society, Miss Podsnap returned to her seat by her new friend.

"Oh my goodness," said Miss Podsnap. "*That's* over! I hope you didn't look at me."

"My dear, why not?"

"Oh I know all about myself," said Miss Podsnap.

"I'll tell you something *I* know about you, my dear," returned Mrs. Lammle in her winning way, "and that is, you are most unnecessarily shy."

"Oh there's Ma with somebody with a glass in his eye! Oh I know she's going to bring him here! Oh don't bring him, don't bring him! Oh he'll be my partner with his glass in his eye! Oh what shall I do!" This time Georgiana accompanied her ejaculations with taps of her feet upon the floor, and was altogether in quite a desperate condition. But, there was no escape from the majestic Mrs. Podsnap's production of an ambling stranger, with one eye screwed up into extinction and the other framed and glazed, who, having looked down out of that organ, as if he descried Miss Podsnap at the bottom of some perpendicular shaft,



brought her to the surface, and ambled off with her. And then the captive at the piano played another "set," expressive of his mournful aspirations after freedom, and another sixteen went through the former melancholy motions, and the ambler took Miss Podsnap for a furniture walk, as if he had struck out an entirely original conception.

## THACKERAY.

ON page 219 mention has been made of Thackeray's familiarity with the age of Queen Anne. Among the writers of that time, "honest Dick Steele," spite of all his faults, was Thackeray's acknowledged favorite. "I own to liking Dick Steele the man, and Dick Steele the author, much better than much better men and much better authors." Captain Steele of the Guards is a delightful character in *Henry Esmond*; and in the *English Humorists* we find one of Thackeray's most charming papers devoted to his old favorite. The following extracts are from that essay.

I am afraid no good report could be given by his masters and ushers of that thick-set, square-faced, black-eyed, soft-hearted little Irish boy. He was very idle. He was whipped deservedly a great number of times. Though he had very good parts of his own, he got other boys to do his lessons for him, and only took just as much trouble as should enable him to scuffle through his exercises, and by good fortune escape the flogging-block. One hundred and fifty years after, I have myself inspected, but only as an amateur, that instrument of righteous torture still existing, and in occasional use, in a secluded private apartment of the old Charterhouse School; and have no doubt it is the very counterpart, if not the ancient and interesting machine itself, at which poor Dick Steele submitted himself to the tormentors.

Besides being very kind, lazy, and good-natured, this boy went invariably into debt with the tart-woman; ran out of bounds, and entered into pecuniary, or rather promissory, engagements

with the neighbouring lollipop-vendors and piemen—exhibited an early fondness and capacity for drinking mum and sack, and borrowed from all his comrades who had money to lend. I have no sort of authority for the statements here made of Steele's early life; but if the child is father of the man, the father of young Steele of Merton, who left Oxford without taking a degree, and entered the Life Guards—the father of Captain Steele of Lucas's Fusiliers, who got his company through the patronage of my Lord Cutts—the father of Mr. Steele the Commissioner of Stamps, the editor of the *Gazette*, the *Tatler*, and *Spectator*, the expelled Member of Parliament, and the author of the "Tender Husband" and the "Conscious Lovers;" if man and boy resembled each other, Dick Steele the schoolboy must have been one of the most generous, good-for-nothing, amiable little creatures that ever conjugated the verb *tupto*, I beat, *tuptomai*, I am whipped, in any school in Great Britain.

Almost every gentleman who does me the honour to hear me will remember that the very greatest character which he has seen in the course of his life, and the person to whom he has looked up with the greatest wonder and reverence, was the head boy at his school. The schoolmaster himself hardly inspires such an awe. The head boy construes as well as the schoolmaster himself. When he begins to speak the hall is hushed, and every little boy listens. He writes off copies of Latin verses as melodiously as Virgil. He is good-natured, and, his own masterpieces achieved, pours out other copies of verses for other boys with an astonishing ease and fluency; the idle ones only trembling lest they should be discovered on giving in their exercises and whipped because their poems were too good. I have seen great men in my time, but never such a great one as that head boy of my childhood: we all thought he must be Prime Minister, and I was disappointed on meeting him in after life to find he was no more than six feet high.

Dick Steele, the Charterhouse gownboy, contracted such an admiration in the years of his childhood, and retained it faithfully through his life. Through the school and through the world, whithersoever his strange fortune led this erring, wayward, affectionate creature, Joseph Addison was always his head boy. Addison wrote his exercises. Addison did his best themes.

He ran on Addison's messages ; fagged for him and blacked his shoes : to be in Joe's company was Dick's greatest pleasure ; and he took a sermon or a caning from his monitor with the most boundless reverence, acquiescence, and affection.

\* \* \* \* \*

Steele married twice ; and outlived his places, his schemes, his wife, his income, his health, and almost everything but his kind heart. That ceased to trouble him in 1729, when he died, worn out and almost forgotten by his contemporaries, in Wales, where he had the remnant of a property.

Posterity has been kinder to this amiable creature ; all women especially are bound to be grateful to Steele, as he was the first of our writers who really seemed to admire and respect them. Congreve the Great, who alludes to the low estimation in which women were held in Elizabeth's time, as a reason why the women of Shakespeare make so small figure in the poet's dialogues, though he can himself pay splendid compliments to women, yet looks on them as mere instruments of gallantry, and destined, like the most consummate fortifications, to fall, after a certain time, before the arts and bravery of the besieger, man. There is a letter of Swift's entitled "Advice to a very Young Married Lady," which shows the Dean's opinion of the female society of his day, and that if he despised man he utterly scorned women too. No lady of our time could be treated by any man, were he ever so much a wit or Dean, in such a tone of insolent patronage and vulgar protection. In this performance, Swift hardly takes pains to hide his opinion that a woman is a fool : tells her to read books, as if reading was a novel accomplishment ; and informs her that "not one gentleman's daughter in a thousand has been brought to read or understand her own natural tongue." Addison laughs at women equally ; but, with the gentleness and politeness of his nature, smiles at them and watches them, as if they were harmless, half-witted, amusing, pretty creatures, only made to be men's playthings. It was Steele who first began to pay a manly homage to their goodness and understanding, as well as to their tenderness and beauty. In his comedies the heroes do not rant and rave about the divine beauties of Gloriana or Statira, as the characters were made to do in the chivalry romances and the high-flown dramas just going out of vogue ;

but Steele admires women's virtue, acknowledges their sense, and adores their purity and beauty, with an ardour and strength which should win the goodwill of all women to their hearty and respectful champion. It is this ardour, this respect, this manliness, which makes his comedies so pleasant and their heroes such fine gentlemen. He paid the finest compliment to a woman that perhaps ever was offered. Of one woman, whom Congreve had also admired and celebrated, Steele says, that "to have loved her was a liberal education." "How often," he says, dedicating a volume to his wife, "how often has your tenderness removed pain from my sick head, how often anguish from my afflicted heart! If there are such beings as guardian angels, they are thus employed. I cannot believe one of them to be more good in inclination, or more charming in form than my wife." His breast seems to warm and his eyes to kindle when he meets with a good and beautiful woman, and it is with his heart as well as with his hat that he salutes her. About children, and all that relates to home, he is not less tender, and more than once speaks in apology of what he calls his softness. He would have been nothing without that delightful weakness. It is that which gives his works their worth and his style its charm. It, like his life, is full of faults and careless blunders; and redeemed, like that, by his sweet and compassionate nature.

\* \* \* \* \*

The great charm of Steele's writing is its naturalness. He wrote so quickly and carelessly that he was forced to make the reader his confidant, and had not the time to deceive him. He had a small share of book-learning, but a vast acquaintance with the world. He had known men and taverns. He had lived with grooms, with troopers, with gentlemen ushers of the Court, with men and women of fashion; with authors and wits, with the inmates of the spunging-houses, and with the frequenters of all the clubs and coffee-houses in the town. He was liked in all company because he liked it; and you like to see his enjoyment as you like to see the glee of a boxful of children at the pantomime. He was not of those lonely ones of the earth whose greatness obliged them to be solitary; on the contrary, he admired, I think, more than any man who ever wrote; and full of hearty applause and sympathy, wins upon you by calling you to share

his delight and good humour. His laugh rings through the whole house. He must have been invaluable at a tragedy, and have cried as much as the most tender young lady in the boxes. He has a relish for beauty and goodness wherever he meets it. He admired Shakspeare affectionately, and more than any man of his time : and according to his generous expansive nature called upon all his company to like what he liked himself. He did not damn with faint praise : he was in the world and of it ; and his enjoyment of life presents the strangest contrast to Swift's savage indignation and Addison's lonely serenity.

## GEORGE ELIOT.

THE seventh chapter of *Adam Bede* allows the story to pause while George Eliot sets before us her theory of the novelist's art. This significant passage should be the introduction to a study of her works. In answer to those readers who prefer to find in novels something superior to every-day life, she writes as follows :

But, my good friend, what will you do then with your fellow-parishioner who opposes your husband in the vestry?—with your newly-appointed vicar, whose style of preaching you find painfully below that of his regretted predecessor?—with the honest servant who worries your soul with her one failing?—with your neighbor, Mrs. Green, who was really kind to you in your last illness, but has said several ill-natured things about you since your convalescence?—nay, with your excellent husband himself, who has other irritating habits besides that of not wiping his shoes? These fellow-mortals, every one, must be accepted as they are ; you can neither straighten their noses, nor brighten their wit, nor rectify their dispositions ; and it is these people—among whom your life is passed—that it is needful you should tolerate, pity, and love ; it is these more or less ugly, stupid, inconsistent people, whose movements of goodness you should be able to admire—for whom you should cherish all possible hopes, all possible patience. And I would not, even if I



had the choice, be the clever novelist who could create a world so much better than this, in which we get up in the morning to do our daily work, that you would be likely to turn a harder, colder eye on the dusty streets and the common green fields—on the real breathing men and women, who can be chilled by your indifference or injured by your prejudice; who can be cheered and helped onward by your fellow-feeling, your forbearance, your outspoken, brave justice.

So I am content to tell my simple story, without trying to make things seem better than they were; dreading nothing, indeed, but falsity, which, in spite of one's best efforts, there is reason to dread. Falsehood is so easy, truth so difficult. The pencil is conscious of a delightful facility in drawing a griffin—the longer the claws, and the larger the wings, the better; but that marvelous facility, which we mistook for genius, is apt to forsake us when we want to draw a real unexaggerated lion. Examine your words well, and you will find that even when you have no motive to be false, it is a very hard thing to say the exact truth, even about your own immediate feelings—much harder than to say something fine about them which is *not* the exact truth.

It is for this rare, precious quality of truthfulness that I delight in many Dutch paintings, which lofty-minded people despise. I find a source of delicious sympathy in these faithful pictures of a monotonous homely existence, which has been the fate of so many more among my fellow-mortals than a life of pomp or of absolute indigence, of tragic suffering or of world-stirring actions. I turn without shrinking, from cloud-borne angels, from prophets, sibyls, and heroic warriors, to an old woman bending over her flower-pot, or eating her solitary dinner, while the noon-day light, softened, perhaps, by a screen of leaves, falls on her mob-cap, and just touches the rim of her spinning-wheel, and her stone jug, and all those cheap, common things which are the precious necessities of life to her; or I turn to that village wedding, kept between four brown walls, where an awkward bridegroom opens the dance with a high-shouldered, broad-faced bride, while elderly and middle-aged friends look on, with very irregular noses and lips, and probably with quart pots in their hands, but with an expression of unmistakable contentment and goodwill. “Foh!” says my idealistic friend, “what vulgar details!

What good is there in taking all these pains to give an exact likeness of old women and clowns? What a low phase of life! what clumsy, ugly people!"

But, bless us, things may be loveable that are not altogether handsome, I hope? I am not at all sure that the majority of the human race have not been ugly, and even among those "lords of their kind," the British, squat figures, ill-shapen nostrils, and dingy complexions, are not startling exceptions. Yet there is a great deal of family love among us. I have a friend or two whose class of features is such that the Apollo curl on the summit of their brows would be decidedly trying; yet, to my certain knowledge, tender hearts have beaten for them, and their miniatures—flattering, but still not lovely—are kissed in secret by motherly lips. I have seen many an excellent matron, who could never in her best days have been handsome, and yet she had a packet of yellow love-letters in a private drawer, and sweet children showered kisses on her sallow cheeks. And I believe there have been plenty of young heroes, of middle stature and feeble beards, who have felt quite sure they could never love anything more insignificant than a Diana, and yet have found themselves in middle life happily settled with a wife who waddles. Yes! thank God; human feeling is like the mighty rivers that bless the earth; it does not wait for beauty—it flows with resistless force, and brings beauty with it.

All honor and reverence to the divine beauty of form! Let us cultivate it to the utmost in men, women, and children—in our gardens and in our houses; but let us love that other beauty, too, which lies in no secret of proportion, but in the secret of deep human sympathy. Paint us an angel, if you can, with a floating violet robe, and a face pale by the celestial light; paint us yet oftener a Madonna, turning her mild face upward, and opening her arms to welcome the divine glory; but do not impose on us any æsthetic rules which shall banish from the region of Art those old women scraping carrots with their work-worn hands, those heavy clowns taking holiday in a dingy pot-house—those rounded backs and stupid, weather-beaten faces that have bent over the spade and done the rough work of the world—those homes with their tin pans, their brown pitchers, their rough curs, and their clusters of onions. In this world there are so many of

these common, coarse people, who have no picturesque sentimental wretchedness! It is so needful we should remember their existence, else we may happen to leave them quite out of our religion and philosophy, and frame lofty theories which only fit a world of extremes. Therefore let Art always remind us of them; therefore let us always have men ready to give the loving pains of a life to the faithful representing of commonplace things—men who see beauty in these commonplace things, and delight in showing how kindly the light of heaven falls on them. There are few prophets in the world—few sublimely-beautiful women—few heroes. I can't afford to give all my love and reverence to such rarities; I want a great deal of those feelings for my everyday fellow-men, especially for the few in the foreground of the great multitude, whose faces I know, whose hands I touch, for whom I have to make way with kindly courtesies. Neither are picturesque lazzaroni or romantic criminals half so frequent as your common laborer, who gets his own bread, and eats it vulgarly but creditably with his own pocket-knife. It is more needful that I should have a fiber of sympathy connecting me with that vulgar citizen who weighs out my sugar in a vilely-assorted cravat and waistcoat, than with the handsomest rascal in red scarf and green feathers; more needful that my heart should swell with loving admiration at some trait of gentle goodness in the faulty people who sit at the same hearth with me, or in the clergyman of my own parish, who is, perhaps, rather too corpulent, and in other respects is not an Oberlin or a Tillotson, than at the deeds of heroes whom I shall never know except by hearsay, or at the sublimest abstract of all clerical graces that was ever conceived by an able novelist.

## THE RULERS OF ENGLAND.

THE NORMAN LINE.	{ William the Conqueror, 1066—1087. William II. (Rufus), 1087—1100. Henry I., 1100—1135. Stephen of Blois, 1135—1154.
THE PLANTAGENETS.	{ Henry II., 1154—1189. Richard I., 1189—1199. John, 1199—1216. Henry III., 1216—1272. Edward I., 1272—1307. Edward II., 1307—1327. Edward III., 1327—1377. Richard II., 1377—1399. Henry IV., 1399—1413. Henry V., 1413—1422. Henry VI., 1422—1461. Edward IV., 1461—1483. Edward V., 1483. Richard III., 1483—1485.
THE TUDORS.	{ Henry VII., 1485—1509. Henry VIII., 1509—1547. Edward VI., 1547—1553. Mary, 1553—1558. Elizabeth, 1558—1603.
THE STUARTS.	{ James I., 1603—1625. Charles I., 1625—1649.
	The Commonwealth, 1649—1660.
THE STUARTS AFTER THE RESTORATION.	{ Charles II., 1660—1685. James II., 1685—1688.
THE HOUSE OF NASSAU.	{ William III., 1688—1702, and Mary, (died 1694).
THE LAST OF THE STUARTS.	Anne, 1702—1714.
THE HOUSE OF BRUNSWICK.	{ George I., 1714—1727. George II., 1727—1760. George III., 1760—1820. George IV., 1820—1830. William IV., 1830—1837. Victoria, 1837—





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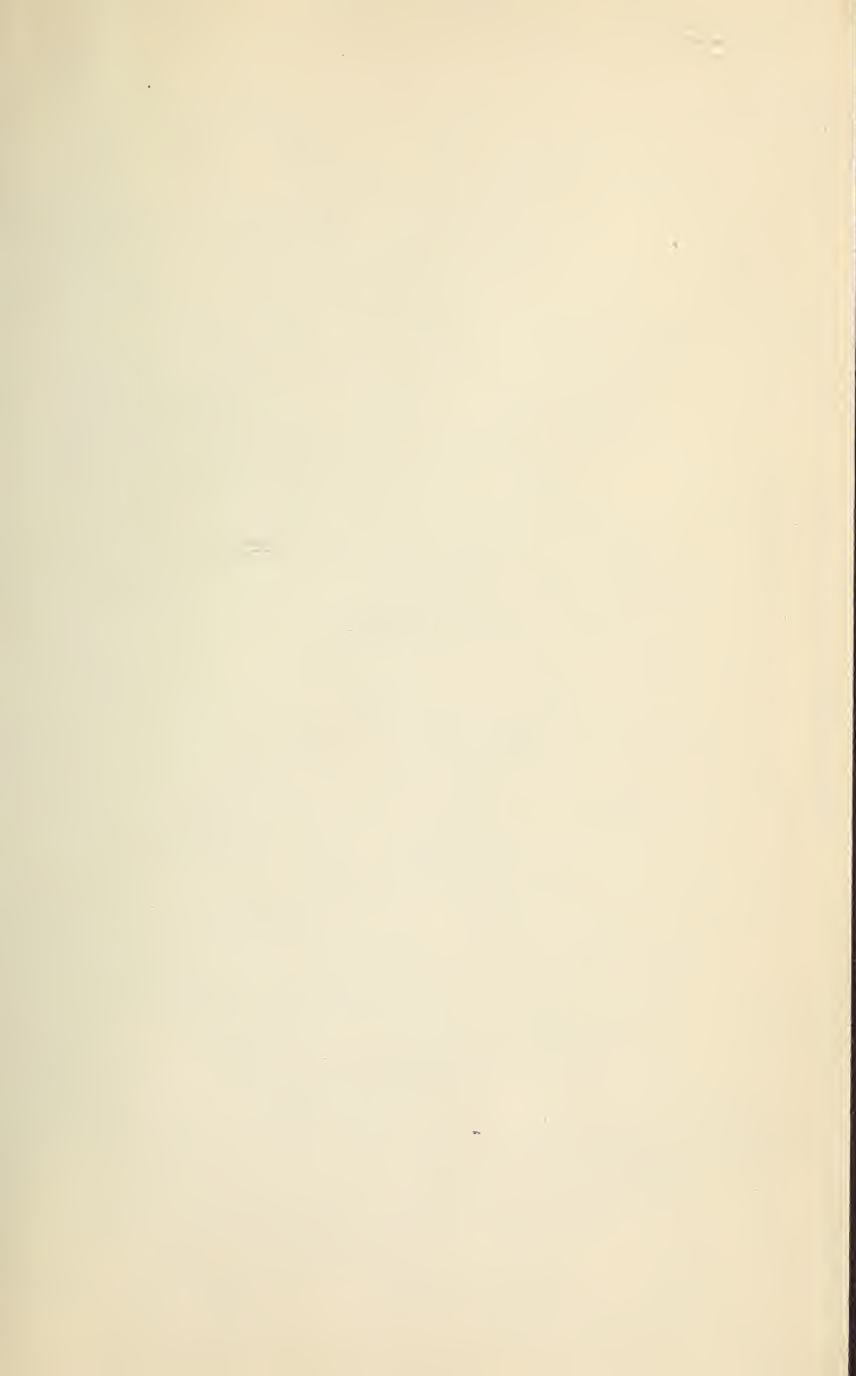
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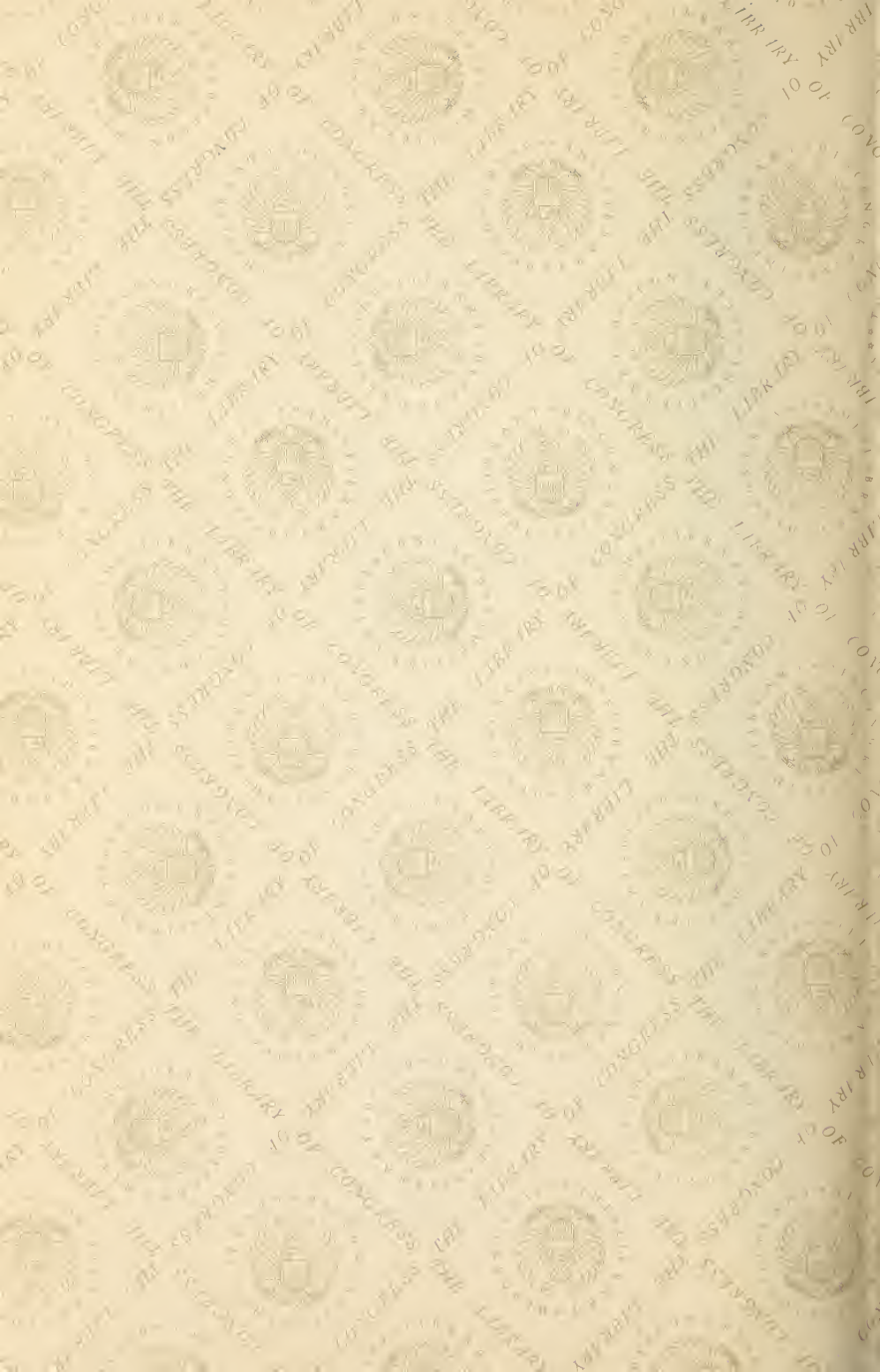
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